



SATURDAY

7 OCTOBER 1995

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INDEPENDENT

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This week, Labour did a deal with a privatised utility, won praise from Norman Tebbit and the Daily Mail, and voted to keep Trident missiles. But one thing didn't change. They ended up singing the Red Flag



The workers' flag is deepest red: Conference reports, page 6; Law Society chief attacks Tories, page 2; Leading article, page 16; Andrew Marr, page 17

Photograph: John Voos

MORE
INDEPENDENT
ON SATURDAY

INSIDE

The charge against
Johnny Cochran,
the man who dealt
the race card

Andrew Marr's
verdict on Labour

MAGAZINE



Japan's most
amazing inventions
Seeing is believing

WEEKEND



Naked ambition
Demi Moore,
Hollywood's
\$12m woman

Talk to the trees
They're dying
to listen to you

Leaseholders
beware
The landlord
from hell is back

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less than £20,000

'More terrible than words can express'

West trial told of kidnap, sexual abuse and murder

WILL BENNETT

Victims of Rosemary and Frederick West were dragged into their cellar, gagged to prevent them screaming and then kept alive for days while they were sexually abused before being killed, Winchester Crown Court was told yesterday.

The events at 25 Cromwell Street in Gloucester, where Mrs West, 41, from Gloucester, whose husband was found dead in his prison cell last New Year's Day, denies murdering 10 girls and young women whose remains were found at Cromwell Street and at their previous home in Gloucester.

Brian Leveson QC, for the prosecution, said: "Over a period of many years, especially between 1972 and 1979, girls who were staying at or visiting 25 Cromwell Street and others who were enticed or simply

abducted had taken there were sexually abused both by Rosemary and Frederick West in the most depraved and appalling way. Those who the Wests believed would not complain perhaps because their involvement appeared to be willing or perhaps because of their very vulnerability, lived.

"Those whom it was believed posed a threat, perhaps because of their injuries, or perhaps because they may talk to the police and report what had happened, death was the option for them.

He told the jury of eight men and four women that the police investigation had begun in 1992, five years after the Wests' eldest daughter, Heather, 16, disappeared in 1987. On 24 February, 1994, officers went to 25 Cromwell Street and two days later found her remains under the patio.

"The police continued digging and what they found was more terrible than words can express. Over the days which followed, the skeleton remains of eight other young women were found each under the ground of 25 Cromwell Street. Each one had been dismembered, heads had been decapitated and in every set of remains bones were missing.

The remains of Charmaine West, daughter of Mr West's first wife, Rana, were found at the Wests' former home at 25 Midland Road, Gloucester. Rana West and Anne McFall, Mr West's former nanny, were found buried near his childhood home at Much Marcle in Hereford and Worcester.

Only Mr West was charged with the murder of the two women found near Much Marcle. Mrs West and her husband were charged with murdering



The accused: Rosemary West is charged with 10 murders

Charmaine and with murdering Lynda Gough; Carol Cooper; Lucy Partington; Therese Siegenthaler; Shirley Hubbard; Juanita Mott; Shirley Robinson; Alison Chambers and Heather West, whose remains were found at Cromwell Street.

However, Mr Leveson told

the jury: "I make it clear from the outset that there is no direct evidence of anyone - Frederick West or Rosemary West - killing any of these girls ... By the very nature of the allegations of murder within the private quarters of 25 Cromwell Street, such evidence is unlikely and although the victims, or what we find of them, tell us something of the circumstances of their deaths, they do not say who killed them. The evidence is circumstantial."

Warning the jurors that some of the evidence that they would see would be "horrible and harrowing" he said that the Wests' first victim was Charmaine. She was seven when she disappeared in 1971 while they were living at 25 Midland Road.

He said: "At the core of this case is the relationship between Frederick and Rosemary West. What each knew about each

other, what they did together, what they did to others and how far each was prepared to go. Much of what follows can be explained in the context that both were obsessed with sex."

In 1972, they abducted and sexually assaulted Caroline Owens, their former nanny, bound and gagged her and took her back to Cromwell Street. There she was sexually assaulted again, but they let her go. She reported the incident to the police and the Wests were fined at Gloucester magistrates' court.

Mr Leveson said that three months later, Lynda Gough, 13, left home in Gloucester and is believed to have gone to live at Cromwell Street and was never seen again. Her remains were found at Cromwell Street in 1994. Over the next 18 months five more victims: Carol Cooper; Lucy Partington; Therese Siegenthaler; Shirley

Hubbard and Juanita Mott were all abducted to Cromwell Street while they were hitch-hiking or on other journeys. Their remains were found in the cellar at Cromwell Street decapitated and dismembered.

The remains of Shirley Robinson, a lodger who had an affair with Mr West and was pregnant by him, and those of her unborn child were found in the garden at 25 Cromwell Street. The bones of Alison Chambers, who disappeared in 1979 were also found in the garden. The Wests' final victim it was alleged was their eldest daughter, Heather, whose disappearance sparked the inquiry.

Horrible secrets, page 3

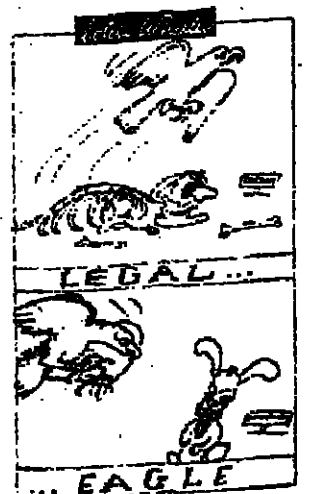
IN BRIEF

Scott Power buys Manweb
Scottish Power has won a £1.1bn bid battle for Manweb, the regional electricity company serving Merseyside and North Wales. Page 21

Eurotunnel cash plea
Eurotunnel's chairman has appealed to the Prime Minister for compensation for the company, claiming the Government has not kept promises made when the project was set up. Page 20

Twins take over the Ritz
London's Ritz Hotel has been bought by the secretive Barclay twins for £75m. Page 20

Today's weather
England and Wales are going to see some rain after a misty or foggy start. Page 2



Nato chief accused of taking bribes

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
AND ANDREW MARSHALL

Nato's top official, Willy Claes, last night faced the prospect of ceasefire charges on the eve of the largest operation that the alliance has ever attempted.

The news could not have come at a worse time. It lays a cloud over the alliance's attempts to put together a peace implementation force for Bosnia and raises the possibility that its 16 members will have to go through a damaging battle to find a successor.

Belgian radio said yesterday that the country's highest court had accused Mr Claes, a former Belgian economy minister, of involvement in bribery in connection with arms contracts. The court recommended that he be charged. Mr Claes was questioned at length earlier this year over alleged bribes paid in connection with Belgian purchases of Italian helicopters. He has always protested his innocence and refused to resign, but the latest revelations will put intense pressure on him and alliance leaders to do something.

The scandal will weaken Mr Claes' tenuous grip on the organisation, currently facing its

toughest ever challenge. Political support for the alliance will be crucial as it moves to implement a peace agreement in Bosnia which may flow from the ceasefire agreed this week.

President Bill Clinton yesterday began the arduous task of mobilising the US Congress to support sending the first US ground troops to Bosnia as part of the Peace Implementation Force (PIF), arguing that "as Nato's leader, the US must do its part and send in troops to join those of our allies under Nato command with clear rules of engagement."

Washington has pledged to send up to 25,000 troops to Bosnia but the Republican-led Congress has questioned whether the US should risk its forces. Mr Clinton will have to convince Congressional leaders that with the operation under Nato rather than UN control, the lives of US soldiers will be well looked-after. "I have pledged to consult with Congress before authorising our participation into such an action. These consultations have already begun. I believe Congress understands the importance of this moment and of American leadership," he said.

Britain is expected to offer an armoured brigade of between 5,000 and 7,000 troops, plus large elements of the headquarters forces. Nato sources said Britain will either reinforce the armoured forces already in Bosnia which will remain after the withdrawal of 24 Airmobile Brigade from Croatia, with more armoured infantry and tanks from Germany, or send a new brigade - one of three in Germany. The Nato Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) headquarters, to which the British provide the largest component, will run the implementation force, but it will probably be commanded by an American general.

The US Defense Secretary, William Perry, said yesterday that he was confident Nato could complete planning for a peace-keeping force soon. "If the peace talks proceed quickly and get a peace agreement in, say, early November, Nato would have to be prepared to make a very rapid deployment of its forces," he said in an interview with CNN.

Nato defence ministers meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia, were yesterday discussing the alliance's involvement in Bosnia.

Teenage Tory is so right he's wrong

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

A fourteen-year-old boy has been threatened with being barred from next week's Tory Party conference in Blackpool for being too right-wing.

Justin Hinchcliffe, the son of a lone parent who lives on income support in Bernie Grant's Labour constituency of Tottenham, was hoping to become the youngest representative ever to attend the conference.

But yesterday the president of the Tottenham Conservative Association threatened to withdraw his pass for the conference and throw him out of the party.

Philip Murphie said he was "shocked" by the views expressed by Master Hinchcliffe in the local newspapers. Among his policy pronouncements was a call to close down the local hospital because it was full of old people.

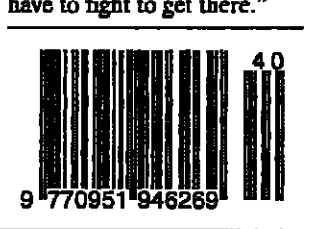
"Tottenham Conservative Association not only completely dissociates itself from the views expressed by Justin Hinchcliffe but we will certainly be reviewing his membership of the Conservative Party," Mr Murphie said.

would be recommending to the constituency executive committee this weekend that it withdraw his conference pass.

But the teenager, who joined the Conservative Party at the age of 10, and describes himself as to the right of Baroness Thatcher, was unrepentant, and planning to speak in the education debate next week when he was interviewed at his school for BBC radio.

The small community hospital took "millions away from the Government" and very few people used it, he said. "The majority of patients in wards should be in nursing homes. We support the National Health Service. That is why we closed down a number of hospitals in the London area," Master Hinchcliffe added.

The GCSE pupil, whose family receives £85 income support each week and £200 a month in rent from the state, said: "I'd like to be Prime Minister but nobody hands you the keys to Downing Street. You have to fight to get there."



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section
ONE

BUSINESS 19-22 COMMENT 16.17 CROSSWORD 2.28 GAZETTE 18
LEADING ARTICLES 16 LETTERS 16 NEWS 2-14 OBITUARIES 18
SHARES 22 SPORT 23-28 UNIT TRUSTS 19 WEATHER 2

Independent
WEEKEND

ARTS 2-4 BOOKS 5-8 CHESS 27 ESCAPES 9-21 GARDENING 10
LISTINGS 14.15 MONEY 22-25 MOTORING 21 PROPERTY 11
REVIEWS 4 SHOPPING 12.13 TV & RADIO 27.28 TRAVEL 17-20

news

Solicitors' new leader denounces Tory rule

STEPHEN WARD
Legal affairs Correspondent

The solicitors' leader Martin Mears used his annual address to his profession yesterday to denounce 16 years of Tory rule as "catastrophic" for Britain.

In an unprecedented political broadside from the head of a profession traditionally in the heartland of Conservatism, he used his presidential address to the Law Society annual conference to speak of "betrayal of the middle classes" by the party he had supported.

He stopped just short of calling on solicitors to vote Labour, but his message was clear. He said after the speech in Birmingham that Labour now better understood the importance of the professions to the country.

Previous Law Society presidents have attacked parts of government policy, but Mr Mears, who was elected this summer, went much further.

"Many people applauded Thatcherism as a kind of return to old-style Conservatism. It was, of course, nothing of the sort. Rather, it was a crude laissez-faireism whose major tenets were that the market was always right, that it was invariably for the benefit of the consumers, that they should get the lowest possible price and that if the weakest went to the wall, so much the better for the community."

"We see the catastrophic consequences of such doctrines all around us. At one extreme

we have the continuing decline of British manufacturing industry. At the other, the traditional village shop and post office have been wiped out under the competition of the huge area supermarkets."

He said he had once seen Thatcherism as the salvation of the country, but after 16 years, the nation was not at ease with itself.

"The Thatcherist state, pre-eminently, is made up of non-cohering particles, individuals elbowing, pushing, and shoving each other in a free market until, at the age of 50, they receive their compulsory redundancy package. All the professions are expected to perform in this murky pond."

Lawyers were suffering, but not because they represented a pocket of restrictive practices and outmoded attitudes. Dentists, doctors, nurses, architects and middle managers were all discontented too, he said. "We are typical."

He said the United Kingdom had one of the lowest per capita incomes in western Europe, low state pensions, a trade deficit and a car industry which imported Rolls Royce engines from Germany.

"I could easily produce many more facts to reinforce the general picture of decline and mismanagement."

He added: "We have to refute the Government's lie that in the nation at large all is well, its policies are working and that our economy is the envy of our neighbours."

Call to scrap sex and race equality bodies

The Law Society was embroiled in accusations of racism and sexism yesterday after its president said that equal opportunities bodies should be abolished, writes Stephen Ward.

In his presidential speech to the Law Society annual conference, Mr Mears said industrial tribunals had been "hijacked by the discrimination industry".

He asked delegates: "Should not those bodies who fund and encourage these preposterous applications - the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality - have their wings clipped? Is it not time to consider whether they have outlived their usefulness? Are they a public benefit or a public nuisance? These organisations were originally set up, quite rightly, to produce greater co-

hesiveness in society. It is now arguable they are doing the opposite."

Mr Mears, whose election campaign this summer included attacks on political correctness in the Law Society, described as "abuses" the "notorious pregnant servicewomen awards", the case of an Irishman whose hurt feelings were soled by the handout of £30,000 or public money, or the temporary secretary who, after working in her job for two hours, obtained over £8,000 in damages when her employer used "gender specific verbal abuse" towards her.

Mr Mears was swiftly attacked by both the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality who said his comments were based on isolated examples and ignorance.



Down but not out: The former Chancellor, Norman Lamont, is seeking a new constituency after not being selected for the Kingston and Surbiton seat

Lamont goes in search of a constituency

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Norman Lamont will take his campaign for a constituency to the Conservative Party conference next week, after suffering the indignity of being turned down for a new seat.

The former Chancellor, who will be underlining his Euroscepticism at a Thatcherite fringe meeting at the conference, made it clear last night that he had not given up his search for another seat after losing Kingston and Surbiton to Dick Tracey, a former sports minister.

His support for John Redwood, the challenger in the leadership contest against John Major, may count against him. Mr Lamont denied it was the

Campaign trail: Former Cabinet minister expected to be a contender for the Chelsea seat held by Sir Nicholas Scott

reason for his defeat in the selection for the Kingston and Surbiton seat, but Mr Tracey, MP for the neighbouring Surbiton constituency, said loyalty was a factor. Mr Tracey attributed his success to his loyalty for Mr Major. "There is a very strong tradition of loyalty to the leadership. They were very loyal to Margaret Thatcher. John Major is now the Prime Minister and they are very loyal to him," he said.

About 60 per cent of Mr Tracey's seat has been put into Kingston and Surbiton, and the former Chancellor suffered the embarrassment of finding the door locked when he went to attend the selection meeting.

Mr Lamont, whose own Kingston-upon-Thames seat will disappear in boundary changes, is expected to be among the contenders for Chelsea, the seat held by Sir Nicholas Scott, now charged with a motoring offence, and Epping Forest, the seat being vacated by Steve Norris, Minister for Transport.

"There are one or two areas in mind, but I did not want to be selected for any other constituency before I had put my name forward for this constituency. Nearly 40 per cent of this constituency goes into this

constituency and I was very much pressed by my own association to put my name forward," Mr Lamont said after his defeat.

"I was well aware of the risks involved. I was well aware of the odds against me. I felt I owed it to them. I did it. I didn't put it off. That's democracy. That's bad luck."

He is also facing tough competition from other senior Tory MPs who have lost their seats to boundary changes, including Sir John Wheeler, another contender for the Chelsea seat; James Arbuthnot, a defence minister; and Sir George

Young, the Secretary of State for Transport.

Virginia Bottomley will next week accuse Tony Blair of attempting to "destabilise" the National Lottery by his announcement that under a Labour government it would be put in the hands of a non-profit-making organisation.

The Secretary of State for National Heritage's attack on the Labour leader's plans to take the lottery out of the hands of Camelot, when its contract ends in six years, will be part of a Tory fight-back at Labour at the Tory party conference.

Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman, will use a working breakfast with journalists today in an attempt to turn the tables on Labour after its most successful conference in decades.

Three killed as skip lorry crushes car

Surgeons were last night trying to save the lives of two children critically injured when a skip lorry overturned and crushed their car - killing a young mother, her daughter and another child.

The accident happened on a straight stretch of road as 33-year-old Susan Prosser drove her eight-year-old daughter Laura Medcroft and two schoolfriends to school at Cadmore End, Buckinghamshire.

Divisional fire officer Ron Adams said: "It would appear that they collided head on and

the lorry took the vehicle backwards down an embankment and into a tree. The car was crushed beneath the lorry."

Mrs Prosser died at the scene of the crash in her home village of Stokenchurch, along with daughter Laura and Nikita Somers, seven, of Chinnor, Oxfordshire. Fire officers using heavy lifting gear and cutting equipment freed her other 18-month-old daughter Rachael, and Nicholas Butler, eight, of High Wycombe, from the wreck of the Fiat Uno. Both were taken

to Wycombe General hospital with multiple injuries.

Rachael was last night being examined at the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford by specialist neurosurgeons at the paediatric intensive care unit. She was said to have severe head, chest and limb injuries.

Nicholas, who suffered head injuries and broken limbs, underwent surgery at Wycombe. Parents in the tiny villages around High Wycombe, who send their children to the 85-pupil Cadmore End Church of

England primary school, were last night dealing with the shock of the accident. Several children and their parents were crying as they left the school in pouring rain yesterday afternoon.

Headteacher Sarah Hargrave said: "Everyone at the school is deeply shocked by this terrible tragedy. Staff have been telling children something about what happened and a specialist in emotional trauma is standing by to help them cope."

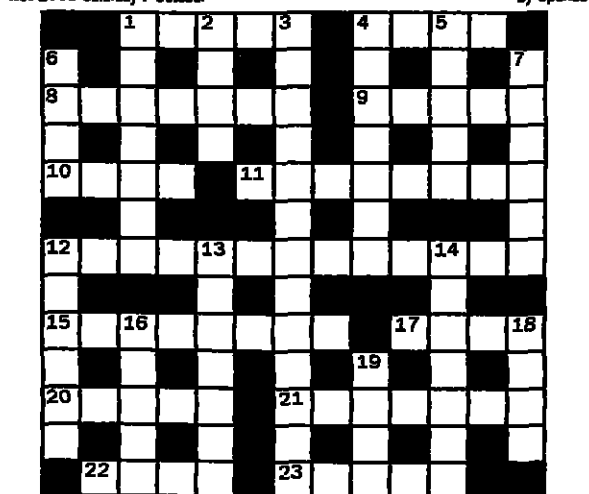
Neighbours and friends described Mrs Prosser, who was

separated from her husband, as a "wonderful mum". One friend, who refused to be named, wept as she said: "She had a really big heart. She was always doing things for others. That's why she was taking the others to school like that."

The driver of the skip lorry, Keith Hunt, also of Stokenchurch, was treated in hospital for shock but released.

concise crossword

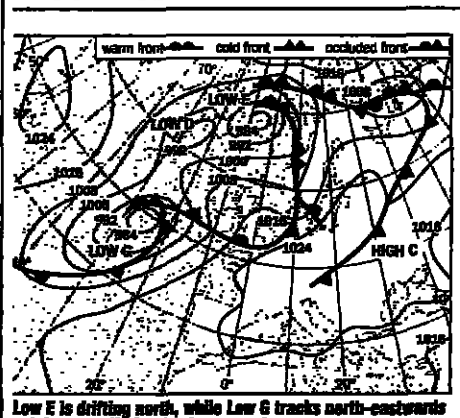
No. 2799 Saturday 7 October By Spurts



- ACROSS**
- French river (5)
 - Upper-class person (4)
 - Storm (7)
 - Purple or green mineral (5)
 - Fotically challenged (4)
 - Amicable (8)
 - Poetic form (13)
 - Feature of typewriter keyboard (5-3)
 - Rossil fuel (4)
 - Coral island (5)
 - Fancy (7)
 - Simple (4)
 - Comfortable slot (5)
- DOWN**
- Piece of embroidery (7)
 - Holly (4)
 - Mass killing (13)
 - Type of material (7)
 - Discovered (5)
 - Pierce (4)
 - Coloured pencil (6)
 - Pertaining to sight (7)
 - In the best circumstances (7)
 - Worship (7)
 - Bouquet (5)
 - Vegetable (4)
 - Powdery mineral (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:
Across: 1 Privy, 4 Lodge (Privilege), 10 Epistle, 11 Ischia, 12 Clear, 13 Lettuce, 15 Area, 17 Screw, 19 Screw, 22 Auto, 23 Airport, 27 Beach, 29 Eagle, 30 Embrace, 31 Creed, 32 Crier. Down: 2 Rhine, 3 Veteran, 5 Edict, 6 Granite, 7 Reave, 8 Belle, 9 Tower, 14 East, 16 Rear, 18 Corsair, 20 Cornucopia, 21 Eager, 23 Uter, 24 Thaw, 26 Osche, 28 Apple.

weather



Low E is drifting north, while Low B tracks north-eastwards and deepens. High F is off the Atlantic.

London	C	13/16	C	15/19	C	14/17	London	C	13/16
Paris	C	10/16	C	10/16	C	10/16	Paris	C	10/16
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The Gloucester victims: The 10 women and girls Frederick and Rosemary West are alleged to have murdered



Charmaine West
Aged 8



Lynda Gough
Aged 19



Carol Ann Cooper
Aged 15



Lucy Partington
Aged 21



Therese Siegenthaler
Aged 21



Shirley Hubbard
Aged 15



Juanita Mott
Aged 18



Shirley Anne Robinson
Aged 18



Alison Chambers
Aged 19



Heather West
Aged 16

The horrific secrets of 25, Cromwell Street

WILL BENNETT

The disappearance of Heather West, Frederick and Rose West's eldest daughter, led ultimately to the Cromwell Street murder inquiry. Winchester Crown Court was told yesterday, Brian Leveson QC, for the prosecution, told the court: "In June 1987, when she was 16 years old, she disappeared. Her parents did not report her missing. The reason is simple. They knew that she was dead because both had been involved in killing her."

"Rosemary West, this defendant, was interviewed by the police. She said that she had heard from Heather on the telephone. The authorities continued looking and on 24 February 1994, armed with a search warrant, they returned to 25, Cromwell Street."

He said that they unearthed Heather West's bones under a patio in the back garden two days later. The head had been severed and the bones had been chopped up to reduce the space in which the skeleton could be buried.

"The police continued digging and what they found was more terrible than words can express. Over the days which followed, the skeletal remains of eight other young women were found, each under the ground at the home of Mr and Mrs West."

Thus began a huge investigation for Gloucestershire Police which discovered that girls who came and went to 25, Cromwell Street over the years had been subjected to "violent and degrading sexual activity". Mr Leveson said that it was not suggested that Mrs. West had acted alone. As far as all 10 murders were concerned, she acted together with Frederick West, her husband, who was found dead in his prison cell on 1 January this year.

Mr Leveson told the jury that Rosemary Lettis met Frederick West in 1969 when she was 15 and he was 27. They began a relationship and their daughter, Heather, was born in 1970 when they moved with West's other two children to a ground floor flat at 25, Midland Road, Gloucester. In November that year, Mr. West was sent to prison for 10 months for dishonesty. Mr. Leveson said: "At the age of 17, it cannot have been easy for Rosemary West to cope with Charmaine, only 10 years younger, Anne Marie, who was six, and baby Heather in a small flat."

Mr. Leveson said that it was impossible to precisely date when Charmaine vanished but when people asked about her whereabouts, they were told that she had gone to Scotland with her mother.

On 25 April, 1994, the police extended their search from Cromwell Street to Midland Road, where they discovered a skull and bones which were later identified by experts as being those of Charmaine.

In January 1972, Frederick West married Rosemary and later that year they moved to Cromwell Street, where they lived for the next 22 years. Mrs West had seven more children.

Mr Leveson said that the Wests picked up a 17-year-old girl called Caroline Owens who was hitchhiking to Tewkesbury in the autumn of 1972. During the journey the Wests offered Miss Owens a job as their nanny and she accepted and moved in to Cromwell Street. After a few weeks Miss Owen left but in December 1972 the Wests once again

happened but she reported it to the police and the Wests were arrested. They were subsequently charged with assault occasioning actual bodily harm and with indecent assault and on 12 January 1973 they were fined at Gloucester Magistrates Court after pleading guilty to both charges.

Mr Leveson then told the horrific story of how a series of girls were murdered after being held captive and sexually abused. The first victim was Lynda Gough, 19, from Gloucester.

Miss Gough, a seamstress, left home suddenly on 19 April, 1973. Her parents did not hear from her and began to make enquiries which led her mother to Cromwell Street, where Mrs West told her that Lynda had gone to Weston-Super-Mare.

"The Crown contended that she had been murdered and buried in what had been an inspection pit in a shed or garage. There she stayed for nearly 21 years until 7 March, 1994.

The body had been dismembered and many of the bones were missing. Near the skull was a ring mask of wound adhesive tape, two loose pieces of tape, a length of string and some knotted fabric.

Mr Leveson said: "The circle of masking tape found with the remains provides the clearest evidence that she was naked but gagged." Mr Leveson said that another five victims were buried in a circle in the cellar of 25, Cromwell Street, clockwise in the order of their deaths over the next 18 months.

The first victim was Carol Ann Cooper, who was 15 when she disappeared. In November 1973, on a visit to her grandmother in Worcester, she ended up in Cromwell Street. Her remains were found on 10, March, 1994. She had been decapitated and dismembered.

The next victim of the Wests was Lucy Partington, 21, a student at Exeter University. In December 1973, she went home to Cheltenham for Christmas and went to visit a school friend.

She left her house just before 10.15pm on 27 December to catch the last bus home. She was never seen again and more than 20 years were to pass before her remains were discovered under the cellar floor at 25, Cromwell Street. She had been decapitated and among the bones there was a kitchen knife.

The next victim was a 21-year-old Swiss Therese Siegenthaler, who was studying sociology in London. She was last seen when she set out to hitchhike across England. She was never seen again and on 5, March, 1994, her remains were unearthed in the cellar of the Wests' home.

Shirley Hubbard, 15, a girl from a broken home went missing in November, 1974. Her remains were found at Cromwell Street on 5 March, 1994.

The last of this group of victims was Juanita Mott, 18, a rebellious girl who came from a broken home in Gloucester.

During 1974 she used to visit 25 Cromwell Street, but later left to live with friends. Her remains were found in the cellar in March, 1994. Like the others, she had been decapitated and dismembered and there was a plastic-covered rope wrapped around her bones and a band of fabric around her skull.

Mr Leveson said that one victim of the Wests who survived sexual abuse was a woman referred to in court only as Miss A. In 1977, aged 15, she ran away from a Gloucester children's home and visited Cromwell Street.

Six weeks later she returned and was taken into a room where there were two naked girls. She was then undressed by Mrs West and sexually abused before Mr West had sexual intercourse with her.

Afterwards the Wests let her go and, said Mr Leveson, "obviously made an assessment that this girl would not go to the police". She only revealed the incident after the bodies were discovered.

Shirley Anne Robinson, 17, was a lodger and had an affair with Mr West by whom she became pregnant. She was last known to be alive on the 9th of May, 1978. Sixteen years later her remains were found in the back garden of 25 Cromwell Street. The body had been dismembered and decapitated and with the remains were those of a foetus of about eight months gestation.

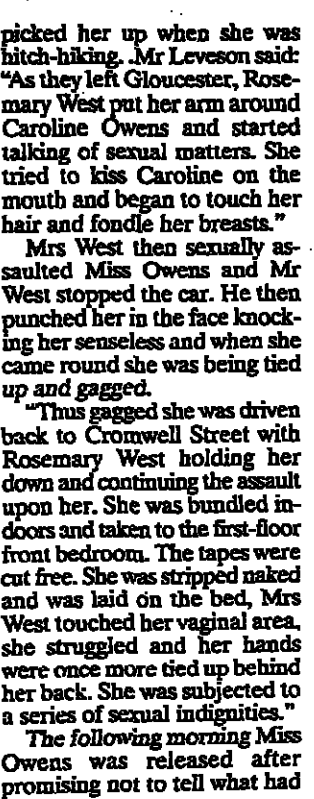
Alison Chambers, 16, was a typical West victim. After her parents' marriage failed, she was taken into care and in January, 1979, was transferred to a children's home in Gloucester.

During that summer she was seen to visit 25 Cromwell Street on several occasions: on 28 February, 1994, her remains were found in the garden.

The Wests' last victim was their own eldest daughter, Heather, who disappeared in 1987, aged 16. After she disappeared, the Wests gave various explanations as to why she had vanished.

But Mr Leveson said: "Heather did not leave home. She was murdered and buried naked in the garden. None of her possessions were recovered, none of her clothes, none of her belongings - not a trace."

Fred West: 'horrific crimes'



Crime scene: 25 Cromwell Street, where Rose West and her husband allegedly murdered 10 girls Photograph: PA

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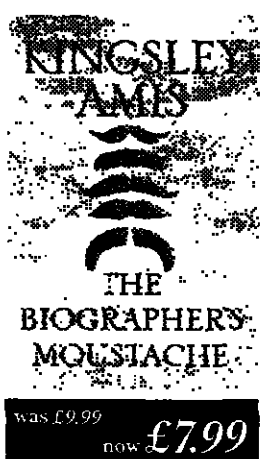
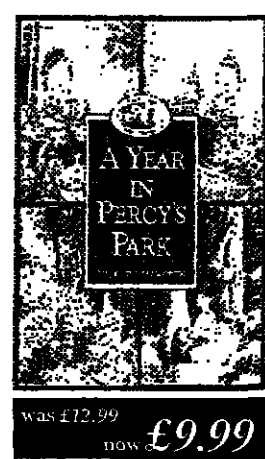
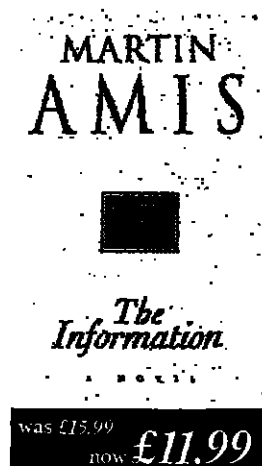
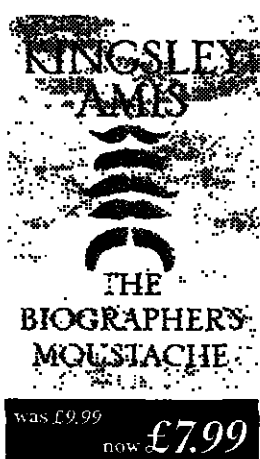
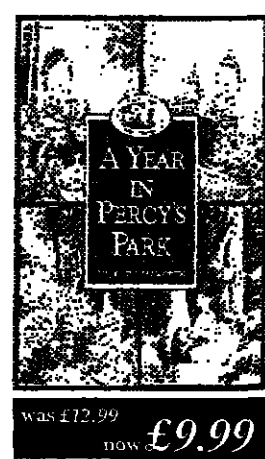
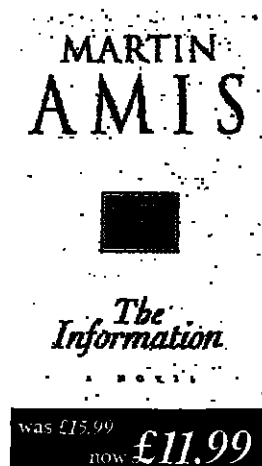
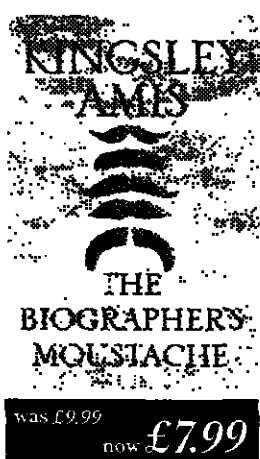
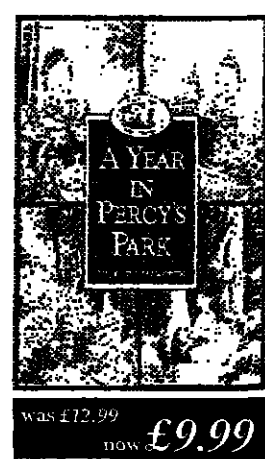
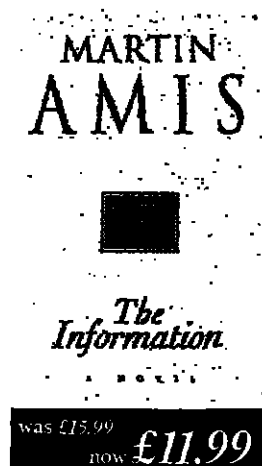
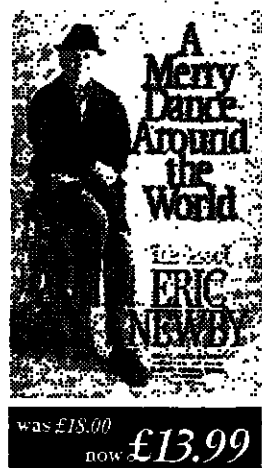
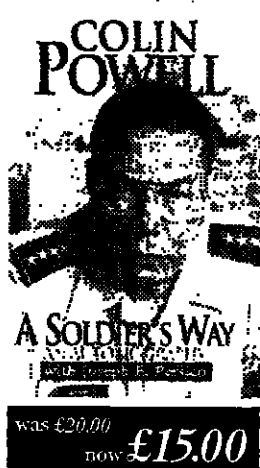
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Problem schools face compulsory inspections

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Two local authorities are facing compulsory inspections of all their schools next year because of concerns about the quality of education they offer.

More than 160 schools in Waltham Forest and Lambeth will be visited by Ofsted, the school inspection body, between January and July. Last night the chief education officer of Waltham Forest was meeting the chief inspector of schools, Chris Woodhead, to try to have the measures stopped. Meanwhile a Lambeth councillor welcomed the move but accused the Government of a political motive in announcing it on the eve of the Conservative Party conference.

Four out of 12 primary schools inspected so far in Waltham Forest have been deemed in need of "special measures," while a fifth is believed to have serious weaknesses. Two out of eight secondaries inspected in the borough have serious weaknesses. In a letter to Andrew Lockhart, chief education officer of Waltham Forest, Mr Woodhead said the schools were causing serious concern.

In Lambeth, five out of 16 schools inspected so far have been picked out for special measures, two secondary and three primary.

Last month Mr Woodhead criticised Lambeth after in-

spectors found every subject except music unsatisfactory at Mostyn Gardens Primary School in Brixton. They discovered that teachers had failed to notice when one child did not speak for three years, and said conditions at the school were some of the worst they had seen. A special education committee meeting in Lambeth next Friday will discuss the report.

Nationally, only 2.5 per cent of the 4,500 schools inspected since the system was introduced two years ago have failed.

When special measures are ordered, the school and its local authority must produce an action plan and prove that substantial improvements have taken place as a result. If they cannot do so, an "education association" can be sent in to take over the school and it can be forced to become grant-maintained.

Mike Tuffrey, leader of the Liberal Democrat group, which has an equal number of councillors with Labour on the hung Waltham Forest council, welcomed the move.

"We are trying to see this positively because we have 20 years of mismanagement to redress. But what I would say is that it is sad that this is being timed for the Conservative Party conference. We have real problems in the borough," he said.

Lambeth said its GCSE results were improving and that a study had found its schools performing better.

Birds of a feather flock to British wildlife reserves



Two birdwatchers focusing their binoculars in preparation for what is expected to be the world's largest gathering of ornithologists this weekend.

World Birdwatch '95, organized by BirdLife International,

a global partnership of bird welfare groups, is expected to attract more than 1 million birdwatching and bird conservation enthusiasts from 100 countries.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is staging more than 140 events in nature reserves, estuaries and woodlands across the United Kingdom.

The organisers hope that the events will highlight the serious problems faced by the world's birdlife and the need to protect its environment.

Barbara Young, the RSPB's

chief executive, said World Birdwatch would provide an ideal opportunity for newcomers to try birdwatching for the first time. She added: "The events across the country should

give everyone the chance to take part somewhere locally.

"Birds are excellent environmental indicators and their health reflects that of the whole natural environment."

Officers sign up for 'drinks patrol' in the line of duty

Undercover police are spying on a town centre's pubs in an attempt to prevent potential incidents of "bar rage". Plain-clothes officers are studying the standards of service, decor and lighting in 30 of Cheltenham's busiest pubs - and also checking whether drinkers are served in the right order.

The aim is to spot problem areas that could make customers hot-tempered and more likely to get involved in disorderly incidents.

Constable Tony Marsh, of Cheltenham police's licensing department, sends written reports to licensees advising them how to improve the pub's environment. He said one priority for licensees was to ensure that customers are served in the

proper order at busy times. "When you queue in a supermarket with everyone else there, you are looking for the shortest queue and making calculations about which one will get through first. People get wound up in these circumstances and their temperature goes up."

"If you transfer that situation to a bar in a pub, you are in a queue which is not easily defined. You know precisely where you are in the order, but the important question is: does the person at the bar know?"

People being served out of order could lead to tension which might boil up to violence and disorder on the streets outside, he warned. Lighting at bars is also important because if it is

harsh and bright it makes people's features look harder and that also increases tension.

"We are not telling licensees how to run their pubs. What we do is give them a report on our findings. It is up to them to address anything which we perceive can affect their customers' behaviour. What we are doing is more of a service than an enforcement measure," he said.

The five officers taking part in the survey arrive at pubs at about 8.30pm and keep them under observation until closing time. But not all the town's landlords have welcomed the scheme. Keith Macauley-Fraser, who runs the Hoghead, said supermarket-style queuing systems would never work in the atmosphere of a pub.

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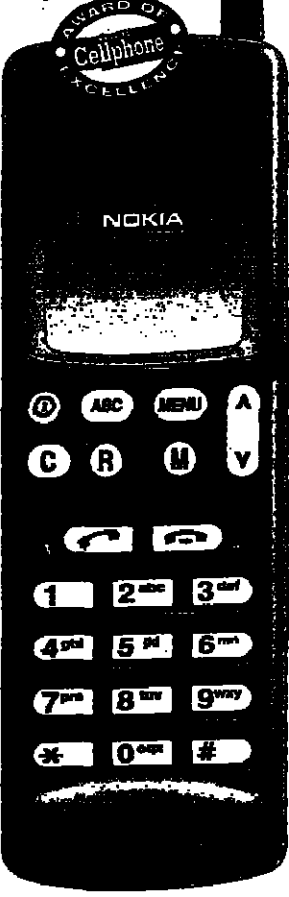
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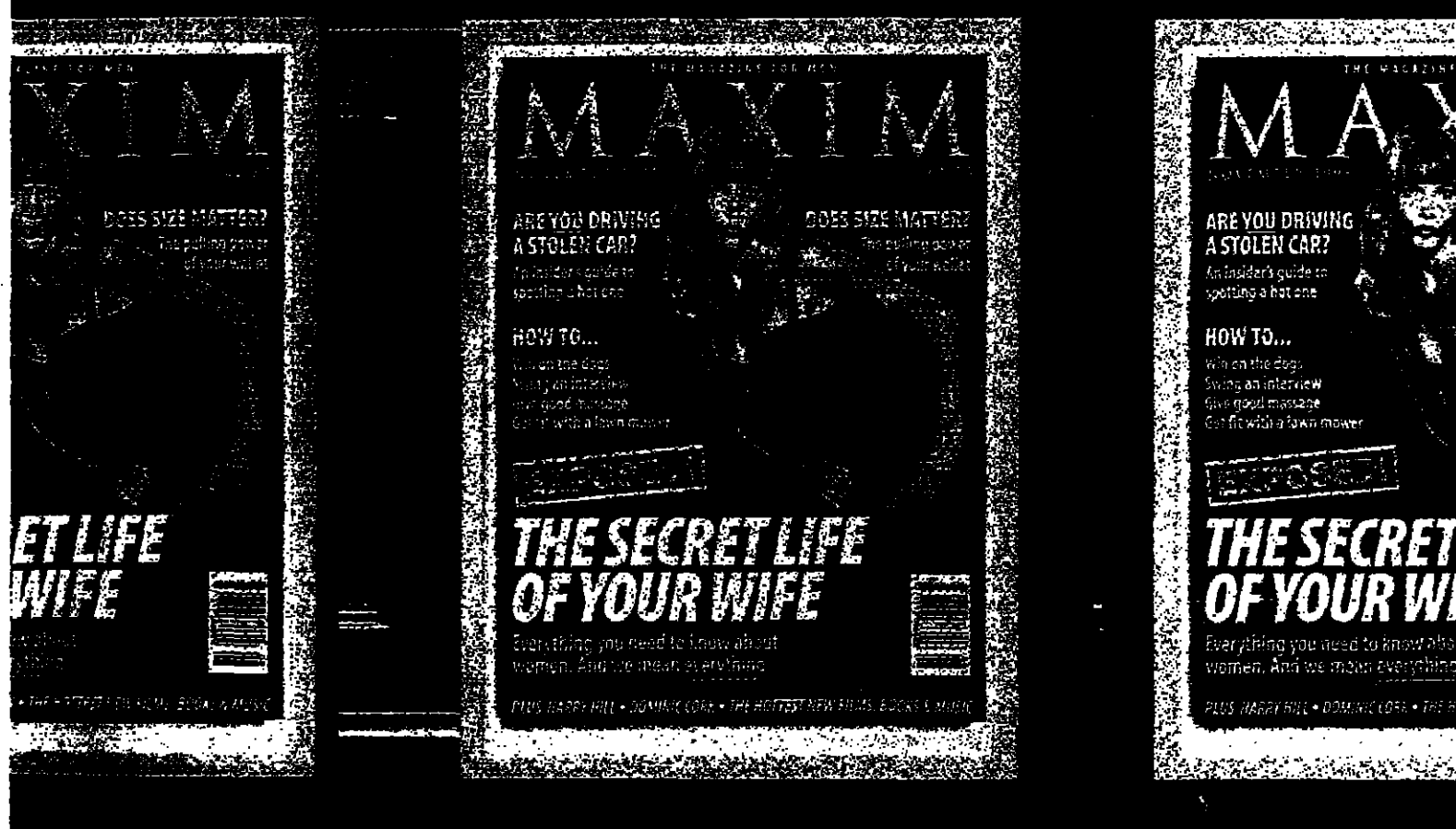
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LABOUR IN BRIGHTON

Deputy leader's speech: Ovation for rousing address telling Tories to return to constituencies and prepare for opposition

Conference relishes Prescott's pork pie

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, yesterday celebrated the "best conference I can ever remember", delighting delegates with a lively mixture of humour and rallying oratory.

In a novel use of props, Mr Prescott flourished a pork pie (rhyming slang for lie) as he attacked a *Daily Express* article claiming he was "spitting blood" at another snub by Tony Blair and his inner circle.

Departing from the text to challenge John Craig, the paper's political editor, to apologise, Mr Prescott declared: "There are lies, damned lies and the *Daily Express*. It is the only paper that still grovels to Tony

Central Office." In another unscripted manoeuvre, Mr Prescott, accompanied by his wife, Pauline, followed up his speech by personally delivering Mr Craig a second pork pie, complete with a blue label, reading "Tory Party Pork Pie", in the press room.

The article claimed Mr Prescott was furious that Peter Mandelson, MP for Hartlepool and a close colleague of Mr Blair, was to be interviewed on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme instead of him.

Mr Craig said: "We stand by our story 100 per cent. John Prescott says one thing in public. He and his friends say entirely different things in private."

Away from the acrimony,

delegates took a cue from Mr Blair and gave their deputy leader a standing ovation before his rallying call, as well as a thunderous ovation afterwards.

Applauding as Mr Prescott declared they could be proud to be a democratic socialist party but never a complacent one, they laughed loudly as he made a string of jokes at the expense of the Conservative Party.

"Lord Tebbit of Telecom was telling Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, to get on his bike and back Labour," bawled Mr Prescott. "One thing about the Tories, they never allow politics to get in the way of their business, do they?"

Drawing roars of laughter with a spirited attack on Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, he said: "He's

the *Kama Sutra* of the Conservative Party. He's been in every position - except No 10." "Sorry mum," he added.

There was more mirth to come with Mr Prescott's account of this summer's Cabinet reshuffle.

The negotiations were about who got Humphrey the cat. "Poor Humphrey, he didn't know if he was coming or go-

ing. One day, he was enjoying a quiet life with John and Norma, and the next there was Heseltine, barging into Major's office through the cat-flap, ramming through the kitchen, knocking over the milk."

But Mr Prescott had a serious message for John Major too: "Go back to your constituency and prepare for opposition."

No identity crisis for the party's annual star turn

DONALD MACINTYRE
Political Editor

John Prescott's *tour de force* yesterday looks very much like becoming an annual star turn at the Labour conference, but that very star turn only underlines the perpetual fascination with the deputy leader's role and what it will be if Labour wins power. And once in power will he become something of a Michael Heseltine, ranging widely in ensuring Labour meets its policy goals, or will he have his own department?

It would be a surprise if the ride had been completely smooth in the 16 months since they were both elected and it hasn't. Mr Prescott was, to say the least, taken aback when the leader told him he was going to replace Clause IV - though when he was won round he was one of those who worked hardest to help secure the change.

For all the warm words that were found to explain away his absence from the strategy meeting convened at the home of the pro-Labour advertising man, Chris Powell, in March, Mr Prescott was understandably pretty annoyed not to be there at the time. He let his dismay show, when after Mr Blair's Clause IV triumph, the leader promised that the transformation of the party, including the further reduction in the block vote, would continue, worrying as much, perhaps, about the presentation of this as about the

content. He gave a television interview in which he made a pointed remark about the need to be magnanimous in victory.

And finally, his exclusion from the circulation list of the Philip Gould memo was yet another aggravation. It is also probable that, as a long-time believer that the economic stranglehold of the Treasury needs to be loosened, he is frustrated - and he is not alone in the Shadow Cabinet in feeling this - that he does have more input to discussion of economic matters.

But Mr Prescott has a sense of history, and he knows what an awful precedent George Brown set as deputy leader with his frequent tantrums and resignation threats. He will not seek to submerge his identity in Mr Blair's, knowing that without retaining his own credibility he is in any case not much use to Mr Blair. But he does respect his leadership - as well as genuinely like the man - even if doesn't always agree with him.

Mr Blair does not give hostages to fortune by publicly predicting what Cabinet post he will give to whom, or that Mr Prescott will be deputy Prime Minister like Mr Heseltine.

But Mr Prescott likes his job; and in any case he is a political grown-up: too interested in power and how to use it in government to allow the aggravations of Opposition to cause the kind of detonation in his relationship with Mr Blair for which some Tories hope.

Delegates told to sing from same hymnbook

STEPHEN GOODWIN

A warning on the distraction of internal party squabbles delivered by Tom Sawyer, Labour's general secretary, briefly interrupted the heady tone of the closing conference session.

Mr Sawyer told delegates that every minute Tony Blair had to spend dealing with "internal party problems and disagreement" deflected him from attacking the Tories and winning for Labour. "We should think about that because he is our greatest asset." Enthusied by a rousing speech by John Prescott, the deputy leader, delegates ended the conference by singing "The Red Flag" and "Auld Lang Syne".

It had help from 40 members of the Ditchling Choral Society who also sang the "Chorus of

the Hebrew Slaves" from Verdi's *Nabucco*.

Mentioning no names, though clearly indicating Roy Hattersley, the former deputy leader who attacked grant-maintained schools earlier in the week, Mr Sawyer said his message was directed particularly at "those who find it easy to have their views reported".

Complimenting delegates on a conference free of defeats for the leadership, Mr Sawyer said that when the voters saw a party where leaders and members shared power and responsibilities together, that was the time they started to trust the party. "And that's the time the Tories start to really worry," he said. "And that's a really important lesson we have to learn and practice, not just in opposition but in government as well."

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سكا من الامم

Flirtation, not infatuation, with Blair



How their policies compare

	Tony Blair	Daily Mail
The economy	Low inflation, jobs and training for young and long-term unemployed. Unclear on competition and markets. Regulation not rationalisation.	Anti-inflation. Wants policies to restore the "feel good factor". Pro-competition; attacked Blair's deal with BT. Hates trade unions.
Tax	Blair: Windfall tax on utilities. Priority tax cut: have VAT on fuel. No public position on income tax.	Sympathetic with windfall tax. Anti-fat cat. Champions income tax cuts.
Welfare	Cut benefits bill by reducing numbers unemployed. Incentives to get jobless back to work: in-work benefits, job subsidies to private employers, training benefits. Might tax child benefit. Minimum pension guarantee. Minimum wage.	Attacks Peter Lilley for failing to cut ballooning social security bill. Opposed to welfare state. Opposed to job subsidies to private employers, training benefits. Opposed to in-work benefits. Opposed to minimum pension guarantee. Opposed to minimum wage.
Europe	Pro-Europe. Ambivalent on single currency. Blair says it could be right if the circumstances are right. Pro-social chapter. Favors incorporation of European Convention on Human Rights into British law.	Biggest difference with Labour. Virulently against all things European, particularly single currency. But careful to stop short of calling for withdrawal from European Union or European Convention.
Crime	Tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime. Legislation to curb noisy neighbours. Anti-squashy landlords. More police on the streets. Increased victim support.	Draconian on crime. Not too worried about the causes of crime. Wants plenty of short, sharp shocks, longer sentences, key thrown away etc.
Capital punishment	Opposed	Sympathetic. Time running out for mercy.
NHS	Keep purchaser-provider split, but replace GP-holding with collective purchasing by GPs.	Pro-NHS market. Agrees with John Redwood that bureaucrats have hijacked the NHS reform. Wants to save small hospitals: give public what they want.
Education	Higher standards. Class size less than 30 for 5-7 year olds. Nursery places for 3- and 4-year-olds. Tougher discipline. Stricter monitoring and appointment criteria for heads. All schools become foundation schools, retaining autonomy from local authorities.	Pro-Government on education reform. Pro-private education. Unsure whether Blair's policy is quasi-Thatcherite or traditional basher of private and selective education.
Political reform	Scottish and Welsh devolution, reform of Lords, referendum on PR.	Pro-Lion. Regards whole reform package as barmy.
Northern Ireland	Less pro-nationalist than his predecessors. Bipartisan approach to peace process.	Backs Major, but concerned about "concessions" to the IRA for no return. Approaching point where it thinks "enough is enough".

Redmond launches teenage TV soap

JOHN MCKIE

First he gave us *Grange Hill*. Next he gave us *Brookside*. He even revamped dusty old *Emmerdale Farm* for the 1990s. Now the television producer Phil Redmond has produced Britain's first ever soap devoted to teenagers.

Hollyoaks concerns the lives and loves of seven characters in their late teens in an affluent suburb of Chester. It plans to blend successful shows like America's *Beverly Hills 90210* and Australia's *Heartbreak High* with British humour. It starts every Monday from 23 October at 6.30pm on Channel 4.

"I started it with the intention that it might eventually go twice a week," said Redmond yesterday. "We need an antidote to when *Coronation Street* starts showing four times a week."

Redmond admits that the show is not big on social realism. The cast, which includes a former Armani model, do not have spots. Two characters have mobile phones. One wants to be a rock star and drives a motorbike.

"I'm the man who supposedly created sociology on TV with *Brookside*. It's nice to be able to do something irreverent. The characters don't go into therapy in every story," he said.

Lucinda Whiteley, Channel 4's head of children's programming, commissioned the series. "These audiences aren't being catered for. We know teens watch *Home and Away* but, for many, it's not hip to watch *Blue Peter* and *The Word* is not targeted at them."

Although *Hollyoaks* is unlikely to be confused with Channel 4 News, which follows it, makers insist that the show will cover serious issues as it progresses. It is even felt it may enjoy the longevity of *Brookside*.

But parents worried about the portrayal of teenage sex, drugs and rock'n'roll may calm down when they hear who stars as the father of one character - 1970s rocker Alvin Stardust.

Jack O'Sullivan wonders if a right-wing press stable really could bring itself to back Labour

It is extraordinary that Lord Rothermere, proprietor of Associated Newspapers, is thinking about backing Tony Blair. Traditionally his newspapers - the *Daily Mail*, *Mail on Sunday* and the *London Evening Standard* - are staunchly pro-Tory. But the Rothermeres are notoriously fickle. In 1931, Stanley Baldwin, the Tory leader, complained about Rothermere's attempts to oust him. Baldwin famously accused the newspaper baron of exercising "power without responsibility: the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages".

John Major would agree with Baldwin. On 4 July, the day Tory MPs decided whether to replace Mr Major with John Redwood, the *Daily Mail* carried a front-

page leader, headlined: "Time to ditch the captain". It was, in Downing Street's eyes, an act of treachery.

It also created difficulties for the *Daily Mail*: having declared in the morning that Mr Major could not possibly win the next general election, the paper found by 6pm that it was stuck with him. Ever since, it has been seeking a fresh direction.

In the same leader the paper confessed that it was "not impervious to the charms of Mr Blair". This attraction was reiterated this week by Sir David English, chairman of Associat-

ed Newspapers, who said that the titles might proffer support to Mr Blair in the next election. This shift amounts to more than disenchantment with the Tories. The *Daily Mail*, which touches the heart strings of middle-class suburban Britain, reflects the views of its readers. Many are charmed by Mr Blair and like his socially conservative message which is tailored to appeal to a group whose votes could decide the next election.

Yet there remains a vast gulf between the values of the *Daily Mail* and those of Labour. The paper's hatred of unions, its unqualified pro-market ideology, its castigation of just about anyone claiming welfare benefits and its anti-immigration stance are anathema to Labour.

They and their paper (nearly 2 million buy it daily) like the Labour leader's tough talk on crime and his championing of

pean than Major, whose "federalism" lies at the heart of the paper's contempt for the Tories. Insiders believe that we are seeing a flirtation, not an infatuation with Labour, at least in the *Daily Mail*, which is by far the most influential of the titles. One source said: "My guess is that the *Mail* will step back from voting for Blair. It is more likely that coverage will be fairer."

Another senior source said: "We will probably be kinder to Labour and distinctly lacking in enthusiasm for Major. But we wouldn't abandon the Tories. We'd do our duty."

But the more moderate *Evening Standard*, pro-European and so far pro-Major, could well break ranks. Mr Blair still has plenty to play for.

Schoolboy stabbed to death in 'brutal attack'

A 15-year-old schoolboy was stabbed to death in "an utterly gratuitous, cowardly and brutal attack from behind", a jury heard yesterday.

Richard Everitt provided an easy target for a gang of Asian youths out for vengeance on another white youth. John Bevan, prosecuting, told the Old Bailey.

The 10-strong gang had gone to Somers Town, north London, hunting for a youth called Liam they suspected had stolen jewellery from a fellow Asian.

"It is plain the group's blood was up - their purpose was to punish Liam or anyone else convenient," said Mr Bevan.

He said Richard had been on his way home with two young friends, carrying some pot noodles he bought after playing football on a local green.

One of his alleged killers was later seen eating noodles while talking of the attack, according to the prosecution.

Mr Bevan said that as Richard and his football companions walked back from King's Cross, the Asian gang surrounded them. One of Richard's friends was asked if he knew Liam and was head-butted and punched when he replied "No".

The friends ran but Richard was not as fast as the others and was an easy target for the pursuing gang and was stabbed between the shoulder blades as he ran. He staggered before collapsing on the pavement and died shortly after from the single wound which penetrated his ribs, right lung and heart to a depth of seven inches.

Abdul Hai and Badrul Miah, both 20, deny murdering Richard in August last year. They, along with 19-year-old Showkat Akbar, also deny conspiracy to inflict grievous bodily harm on Liam, whose full name has not been given, and violent disorder.

Hai and Miah deny perverting the course of justice by trying to get a teenage girl to provide false alibis for the murder.

Mr Bevan said: "No one, apart from the Asians involved, knows what happened as no one actually witnessed the killing." There was no evidence Richard had been fighting, so "he must have been the victim of... a brutal attack from behind". He said he was not saying either of the defendants was the knifeman but that the attack was a joint enterprise. He alleged Miah was the ringleader and Hai was

with him. About 20 minutes after the stabbing, Miah and Hai joined a group who were talking in the street. Miah was eating a pot noodle and Mr Bevan said: "He told the group they had 'stabbed up a white boy'."

Mr Bevan said blood matching Richard's had been found on Miah's jeans so he must have been close to the attack.

The trial was adjourned until Monday.



Richard Everitt: Easy target

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news

Tories could extend voucher scheme to all school pupils

JUDITH JUDD
and FRAN ABRAMS

Speculation is mounting that the Government is considering legislation that would enable it to introduce vouchers for all stages of education. Some ministers want to fight the next election on a manifesto including vouchers for 16 to 19-year-olds and for university students, in spite of setbacks in their plans for nursery vouchers.

Pre-school playgroups which had threatened to pull out of the scheme after being offered only half the value of the £1,100 vouchers for each child have forced the Government to back down and offer the full amount, it was announced yesterday. Plans for a pilot involving 12 local authorities are still foundering, with only two signed up and another two likely to do so.

Ministers have already promised a Bill in next month's Queen's Speech which will allow Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, to take money away from local authorities and distribute it to parents as nursery vouchers.

However, some observers say the Bill may not specify that the money must be used for four-year-olds, thus opening the door for vouchers for older students. Mrs Shephard has

said that there is no question of introducing vouchers for pupils of compulsory school age, from five to 16.

The battle between the Treasury and Mrs Shephard over vouchers began with a lack of enthusiasm for nursery vouchers, eventually overruled by the Prime Minister when he announced the scheme during the Conservative leadership contest. Mrs Shephard also believes vouchers for 16 to 19-year-olds might not be a success.

However, there is strong support for vouchers for that age group from the right wing of the Tory party and from the Treasury which believes that, if the value of the voucher is set low, it is a way of saving money. Yesterday, a leaked memo from the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, indicated that he is keen to see such a scheme in action.

On higher education, one of the Conservatives' manifesto advisory groups has come up with a scheme to give vouchers covering a minimum tuition fee. Students with high grades might get more than the minimum, but they might still need to top up the fee to win places at the most prestigious universities. They would be able to borrow the difference from a new privately financed loan scheme, replacing the existing loans which cover only maintenance costs.

However, Bryan Davies, Labour's higher education spokesman, said the Tories' voucher schemes would benefit the well-off who were already paying for places.

"Vouchers part-covering fees for university and college courses will skew access to higher education in favour of those with the deepest pockets," he said.

Even the Pre-School Learning Alliance, which learnt yesterday that it had won concessions from ministers after threatening to pull out of the nursery scheme, still had reservations last night. It had threatened to pull out if ministers did not give pre-school playgroups the same £1,100 per child which they were offering to nursery schools.

Margaret Lochrie, the alliance's administrator, was "delighted" at the news. But she said the voucher scheme would create unwelcome competition and also did not provide for adequate teacher training. She added: "Many of our members share our anxiety about the voucher initiative as a whole."

A spokesman for the Department for Education and Employment said the Government remained attracted to the principle of learning credits for 16 to 19-year-olds and was considering responses to a consultation exercise.

Industrial heritage: Engineer's sketches confirm role in building of Swindon



Grand design: The main engineering works in the group of 300 buildings in Swindon planned by Brunel and his office Photographs: John Lawrence

Drawings reveal key Brunel site

DAVID KEYS
Archaeology Correspondent

Historians have rediscovered one of the industrial revolution's most important monuments – the largest complex of buildings designed by Victorian Britain's most famous civil engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

A group of 300 buildings in Swindon, Wiltshire, have just been identified by researchers as having been designed by Brunel and his office.

Industrial archaeologists and historians believe that the complex – the early Victorian core of the railway town of Swindon – is the largest example of Brunel's work in the world.

The research shows that all 300 early structures were designed under his direction, while dozens were designed personally by him in the 1840s. Up till now only six had been attributed to him.

The revelation is the most important industrial archaeology discovery in recent years. The buildings now being attributed to Brunel include cottages, shops, pubs, locomotive and wagon servicing and repair sheds, foundries and part of Swindon Railway Station.

The discovery is likely to force a reassessment of aspects of Brunel's career – refocusing on the importance of residential and factory architecture. Appreciation of Brunel's work has previously concentrated on achievements such as Paddington Station (built 1854), Box Tunnel near Bath (1841), Saltash Bridge, Plymouth

(1859), the steamship *Great Britain* (1844) and the Clifton Suspension Bridge which he designed in the 1830s.

Two researchers from the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England – Keith Falconer, an industrial archaeologist, and John Cattell, an architectural historian – discovered Swindon's 300 Brunel buildings whilst examining unrecognised Brunel drawings at the former British Rail Western Region archives in Swindon.

Then the duo went on to Bristol University where they examined one of Brunel's sketch books – and discovered that the images contained in it were of the Swindon complex.

Further unknown material was then found at Wiltshire's County Record Office – and at the Public Record Office in London, signed by Brunel.

Other papers have even revealed that Brunel was involved in setting the rents to be



Brunel: career re-evaluated

charged to the railway employee tenants of the cottages he designed. This enabled him to work out how much could be spent on constructing each building. Cottages, for instance, had to be built for £100 each.

"We were amazed that such a large corpus of buildings had until now escaped proper attribution," Mr Cattell said.

A full account of the discoveries will be published later this month in *Swindon: the Legacy of Railway Town* (John Cattell and Keith Falconer, RCHME/HMSO, £19.95).

Opera forced to go part-time

Scotland's national opera company yesterday announced plans to appeal to the Government to bail it out of a cash crisis which is forcing it to go part-time.

Faced with a gap in its budget of £750,000, Scottish Opera said the decision to become a part-time company – as well as introducing flexible contracts and pay cuts – was a long-stop option, and the lesser of two evils. Its chairman, Sandy Orr, said that the board rejected unanimously the option of disbanding its own orchestra as a way of saving money.

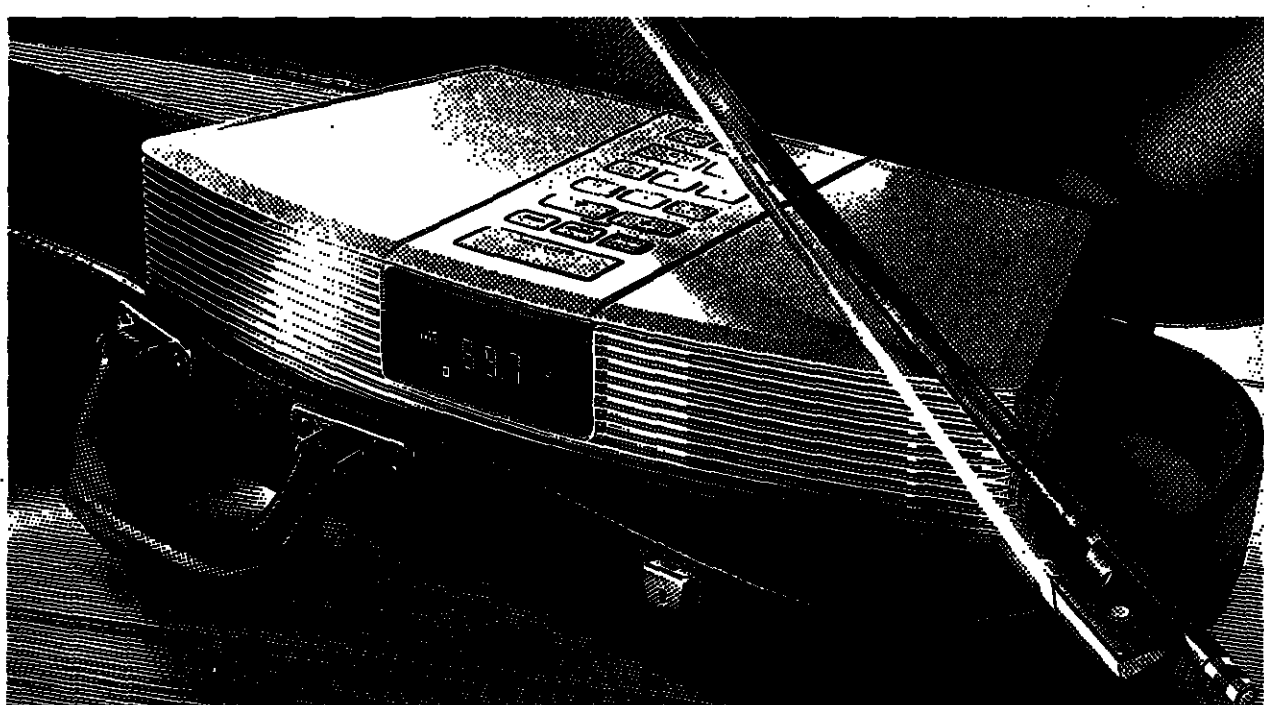
This alone would not solve

the company's financial problems and was unacceptable on artistic grounds. He appealed to Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland and "a man recognised for his belief in Scottish excellence", to secure the future of Scottish Opera.

The suggestion of disbanding the orchestra came from a Scottish Arts Council working party in a report published yesterday. It involved the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra providing musicians for Scottish Opera. But Mr Orr emphasised that the opera com-

pany was a national one and had to perform at a certain level of quality. "I think we can be proud of what we do in that regard. Without the control of the core of orchestral quality I think this company would be set on a downward path."

However, he could not pretend the part-time option did not set the company on that path. But he insisted that it was "a choice between two evils". The only way to achieve the savings necessary to balance the books was to put everybody on flexible contracts and to operate the company for nine months of the year.



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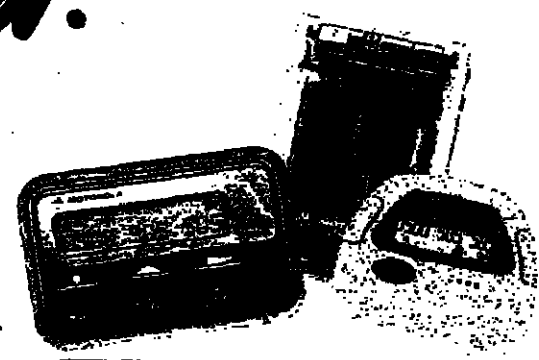
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Somebody once said there were
only two things in life you could
count on: death and taxes.

Well, maybe there's a case
for adding another to the list.
Nursing home bills.

Nursing home bills. The words have a
cosy ring to them, don't they? But the truth
is, they can devour your entire lifetime's
savings at a speed that's frightening.
How fast exactly? Well, hold on to
your Parker Knoll: the current going rate

for long term care in a nursing
home is around £400 a week.
At £20,000 a year, that's almost double
the current average pension.

[WHAT ABOUT MY NEST EGG?]

Ah yes, your nest egg.

Well, even if you've carefully salted away
£100,000 say, nursing home bills could

whittle that away in no time.
And once the nest egg's gone,
how soon before you're forced
to sell the nest itself?

{ Just for the record, 40,000
homes were sold to pay for long
term care bills in 1992 alone. }

And weren't you hoping
to leave all your worldly goods to your
children rather than the proprietors of
Sunnyview nursing home?

[WON'T THE STATE HELP?]

Don't count on it. As the population

ages, funding of long term care is
becoming ever less generous.
And stringent means-testing is now in
place to determine how much you
are liable for. As rules stand, you'll receive
no State or local authority assistance
whatsoever if you have total assets of over
£8,000. And they'll only foot the
bill in its entirety if you have
total assets of £23,000 or less.
Of course, the hope is that
your family will rally round.
Yet all the evidence is that
informal family care-the kind
that was taken for granted a
generation ago-is becoming
steadily less common as
society changes its habits.
For instance, the number of
working women is
increasing. The divorce rate is
on the up. Families are getting smaller
and dispersing geographically.
Life, as we are in the
habit of saying, is changing.

[IS THERE AN ANSWER?]

Yes, there is an answer-The
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protection built in. We invest your lump
sum on your behalf, aiming to provide
long term capital growth.
The insurance premiums are then deducted
from the value of the bond.
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international

Leaders confident the truce will hold

ANDREW GUMBEL
Rome

International peace negotiators, flush from the news of a US-brokered ceasefire in Bosnia, yesterday managed to convene the foreign ministers of Croatia, Bosnia and the rump state of Yugoslavia round the same negotiating table and said they were cautiously optimistic that hostilities would cease on or very shortly after the target date of next Tuesday.

Delegates from 12 countries - including the three directly interested parties, five EU member states, Russia, the United States, Canada and, for the first time, Japan - gathered in Rome for a meeting of the so-called Consultation Group on former Yugoslavia to discuss the nuts and bolts of the agreement.

All the non-combatants have pledged funds to reconstruct the country as an inducement to maintain the ceasefire once it is in place.

"This ceasefire is entirely different to all that preceded it, because none of the others had agreement at head of state level," US envoy Richard Hol-

brooke told a news conference. He nevertheless injected a note of heavy caution: "Let no-one think that peace is imminent or around the corner... The task ahead of us is daunting."

One source close to the delegation dismissed such wariness as the inevitable consequence of too many disappointments in the past and said the mood was more optimistic than it had been in more than three years of fighting. "The heads of state have put their names to this, so now their prestige is on the line," the source said.

One factor in the negotiators' favour is the balance of territory, which according to Mr Holbrooke is roughly 50-50 between the Bosnian Serbs and the Croat-Muslim alliance. A peace plan approved by the three sides in June 1994 but never implemented envisages a 51-49 per cent carve-up.

A potential flashpoint is eastern Slavonia, the region on the Croat side of the Croat-Serbian border which saw heavy fighting in 1991 and remains a hotly contested territory because of its large Serb minority.

Mr Holbrooke warned that

eastern Slavonia could "overshadow and undermine" the peace effort, although he noted that talks on the issue had made a good start this week and were due to resume on Monday.

The Belgrade Foreign Minister, Milan Mihutinovic, was clearly uncomfortable on the issue, saying talks were only at "the beginning of the beginning", and urged all sides to separate eastern Slavonia from the rest of the negotiating process.

With the ceasefire imminent the UN's tasks around Sarajevo fall into three main categories: restoring the flow of gas and electricity to the city; securing a road to the eastern Bosnian enclave of Gorazde; and policing a ceasefire. The last depends on the first - the truce is to take effect only when Sarajevoans are the recipients once more of heat, light and water.

First, engineers from the UN and aid agencies must clear thousands of mines placed around electrical plants and pylons, before repairing lines and other installations damaged in the war. One stretch of line,



Young hopefuls: Sarajevo orphans await the ceasefire

one mile long, is especially problematic as it has been sown with mines by all three armies: government, Serb and Croat.

Specialists are also upgrading or removing the many jerry-rigged gas pipelines, mostly rubber hoses connected by enterprising Sarajevoans, to avert the risk of multiple explosions when the mains supply is turned back on.

Gas flows in via Serbia from Russia - which had threatened to withhold all supplies unless it received payment for war-time

supplies - and should reach Sarajevo by Monday evening.

War damage has in the past hampered the flow of water, gas and electricity to the city, but the fundamental reason for the shortage of utilities has always been political: the rebel Serb leadership chose to turn off supplies. All that should now change. "The problems are more technical than political," William Eagleton, the UN envoy in charge of reconstruction, said yesterday.

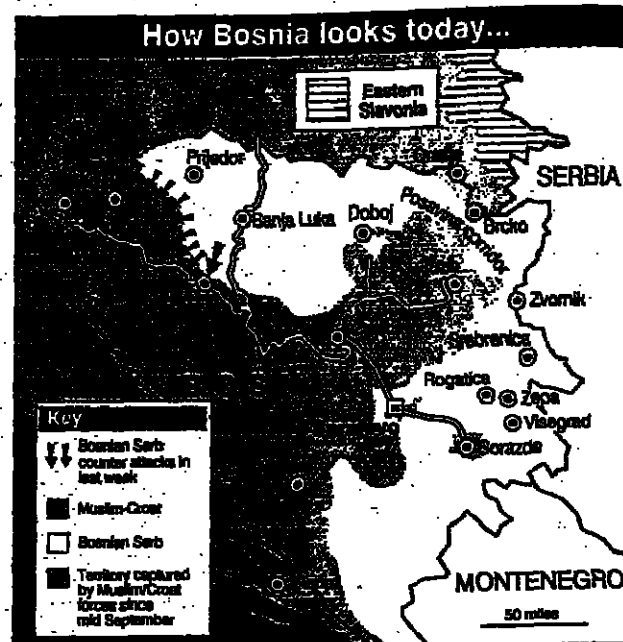
Ensuring a safe route to

Gorazde for civilians and UN traffic will also require the peace-keepers to clear mines and perhaps repair roads or bridges destroyed by NATO air raids. A first reconnaissance trip was planned for yesterday.

The UN has yet to finalise plans for ensuring the safety of those using the road, which will cross more than 100km of hostile, Serb-held territory, but an official in Sarajevo said travel along the route would be in convoys with well-armed military escorts.

"It is clearly a very problematic task," Chris Guinness, a UN spokesman in Zagreb, said yesterday. He said the route was unlikely to open on Tuesday, when the ceasefire is due to take effect. But he added that utilities should be restored by the deadline of midnight on 10 October.

The UN headquarters in Sarajevo is considering how best to police the ceasefire once it takes effect, but a source said it was unlikely to deploy peace-keepers along the front line, where they might be at risk. Instead, it is likely to patrol from the air, using helicopters.



West hopes to woo Russia for peace force

RUPERT CORNWELL
Williamsburg, Virginia

American and Nato officials want Russia to have a "substantial" role in a Bosnian peace-keeping operation, under an agreement to be endorsed by Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin at their summit in New York later this month. They hope the accord will be a first step towards removing Moscow's suspicions about the alliance's plans to enlarge to the East.

The first outlines of the possible arrangements began to emerge at the meeting of Nato foreign ministers here, unexpectedly transformed by Thursday's ceasefire agreement into an urgent planning session for a Peace Implementation Force (PIF) deployment in the Balkans which could start as soon as late November.

The options, to be discussed by the US Defense Secretary, William Perry, when he meets his Russian opposite number, Pavel Grachev, in Geneva this weekend, include the creation of a "16-plus-one" body, consisting of the 16 Nato countries plus Russia, at Nato headquarters in Brussels. The two defence chiefs will also discuss the secondment of senior Russian officers to the alliance's military command in Mons, Belgium. Moscow should ideally be part of a "liaison structure at each level of the operation," a Nato official said.

The allies remain adamant that the PIF must have a single military chain of command under Nato, whatever Russia's reluctance to have its troops commanded by the treaty organisation. But "a substantial offer" was essential, and Russia might well be given vital non-military tasks, including engineering and resettlement programmes.

Especially worrying to Nato is the risk of a "Berlin-style partition" in Bosnia, where different ethnic parts of the country are policed by forces from a sympathetic patron - for example Russian troops in Bosnian Serb areas and US and other alliance contingents around Sarajevo and the other Muslim-controlled parts of the country. "Nato may have had its preferences in the past, but we must be even-handed now," the official said. The same, he implied, went for Russia.

Admiral Leighton Smith, the American commander of Nato forces in Southern Europe, would take overall charge of the operation, moving from Naples to Zagreb to oversee the operation. The theatre commander on the ground in Bosnia itself is likely to be General Mike Walker, the British commander of the alliance's reaction force.

With time of the essence, the deployment will use the existing stand-by plan for Nato to intervene to extricate the United Nations peace-keepers, had that been necessary. But that operation, drawn up to run for six to 12 weeks only, must now be restructured to last a year - the expected outside limit of the

new Nato mission. If all goes well, Nato's reaction force command will be moved from Germany to Tomislavgrad, Croatia, in 72 hours, possible only with a pre-positioning of equipment and men that the Croatian government has yet to agree.

The defence ministers here accept that a peace agreement will have no chance unless it is absolutely clear-cut, with maps laying out a division of territory, and the position of every village precisely demarcated. In the case of Bosnia, deliberate ambiguities, usually the salvation of hard-contested diplomatic negotiations, could be fatal. For that reason too, military planners want "front-loading" the dispatch of a powerful force early on to deter last minute grabs for extra land by one side or other, rather than



Liaison: William Perry, US Defense Secretary

a smaller force that would have to be increased if trouble arose, increasing the risk - especially sensitive in the US in an election year - of America and Nato being sucked into a Vietnam-like morass.

Once this force is in place, the alliance hopes it can persuade the better-armed belligerents to reduce their own forces. "to get the Bosnian Serbs and the Croats down, rather than the Muslims up". Otherwise whatever the objections, of France in particular, Washington would be happy to see the less well-equipped Muslim army "professionalised and retrained," as Pentagon jargon has it.

Mr Perry's readiness - if all else fails - to beef up Bosnia's forces, is partly designed to sell the peace deal to a wary US Congress that only six weeks ago was poised to force an end to the UN arms embargo.

But Nato hopes its recent bombing campaign has convinced the Serbs that it means business. Perhaps, as the British Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, said: "The knowledge we're ready to arm Bosnia will be a strong incentive for the others to do a deal."

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Skirmishes go on as Bosnia counts down to ceasefire

EMMA DALY
Zagreb

Battlefields across Bosnia were mostly quiet yesterday, despite fears of an upsurge in fighting to win last-minute gains before the ceasefire that is due to take effect on Tuesday.

Skirmishes continued along two fronts in north-western Bosnia, where Serbs claimed to have retaken the town of Kijuc, and Croatian artillery weighed in to support a Bosnian counter-attack beyond the town of Bosanska Krupa.

Major Myrman Sochacki, a UN spokeswoman in Sarajevo, said, "It is rather quiet. Bosanska Krupa is reported as tense and obviously the fighting is ongoing because we have no freedom of movement south of Kijuc on the road to Kijuc."

Foreign military observers do not believe Kijuc has fallen. Despite the Serb claims, there were no signs of panic in Bihac, only 55 miles away and home to most of the troops fighting around Kijuc. "It's not true," said one monitor emphatically.

The town's fall would be a serious blow to Bosnian forces seeking control over the main road from Bihac to central Bosnia. It would mark another chapter in the nightmare for around 300 Muslim refugees resettled in Kijuc last month a week after being expelled from their homes by Serb authorities.

The observers saw a Croatian artillery battalion deployed in Bosnian territory west of Bosanska Krupa to support a government push against Serbs who have shelled the town. "There is a build-up of forces," said an observer. "Either they expect a [Serb] counter-attack, or they are planning to attack. Something will happen."

Elsewhere, the front lines were calmer. Although peacekeepers have virtually no access to contested areas, they assess the action by counting explosions. On that basis, they believe the fighting has died down around Mount Ozren and the Serb-held town of Doboj, scene of a major government offensive over the past few weeks.

The Bosnian army, flushed with its recent successes, may be content now to dig in and hold on to its gains until Tuesday, marshalling its forces against

any possible Serb attacks. "Generals and soldiers have four more days to show what they can do on the ground, and then there will be lights out on all Bosnian battlefields," an optimistic editorial in the Sarajevo daily *Ostobodjenje* said.

Chris Guinness, the UN spokesman in Zagreb, noted that circumstances – including the US involvement and a better balance of forces – give this truce a better hope than any of the 35 or 36 preceding it. But the ceasefire is also convenient for everyone, an annual event that has come a few weeks early this year.

The front lines always freeze during the winter and all sides – but particularly the Bosnian forces – need a break. Real peace will come only if the guns are silent and the politicians keep talking.



Face of war: A Bosnian-Serb soldier waits for help after being injured in fighting with Muslim and Croatian forces near Kijuc. Photograph: Ranko Cukovic/Reuters

IN BRIEF

Prisoners row hinders West Bank deal

Jerusalem — Hours after the Israeli parliament ratified the second phase of the Rabin-Arafat peace agreement, both sides announced new measures to speed the extension of Palestinian self-rule on the West Bank, but a crisis over women prisoners endangered a smooth transition, writes Eric Silver.

Israeli ministers, meeting in Tel-Aviv, agreed to release 23 Palestinian women prisoners tomorrow and a first batch of more than 1,100 of their 5,000 male prisoners on Tuesday. Plans were also disclosed to start evacuating seven Arab cities on 19 November. But President Ezer Weizman refused to grant clemency to two women prisoners serving life sentences for murders committed inside Israel, while ministers declined to release two women involved in murders on the West Bank.

Clinton eases curbs on Cuba

Washington — President Bill Clinton eased restrictions on travel to Cuba by Cuban-Americans, academics, clergy and students and invited news organisations to open offices there. This would encourage the island's "peaceful transition to a free and open society," he said. The 33-year-old trade embargo will remain in place. AP

Chechnya general wounded by bomb

Moscow — Russia's top commander in Chechnya was critically ill after a bomb attack in Grozny which was reported to have killed his aide and driver and wounded at least nine other Russian servicemen. Lieutenant-General Anatoly Romanov was rushed to hospital in the north Caucasus town of Vladikavkaz with brain injuries. Reuters

Comoros coup supporters go free

Moroni — Hundreds of Comorian soldiers who surrendered to a French intervention force were released under an amnesty granted to supporters of the short-lived coup on the Comoros Islands led by the mercenary "Colonel" Bob Denard. AP

'War criminal' reborn as a 'peace-maker'

Steve Crawshaw looks behind the transformation of Serbia's President

Belgrade — Night after night he pops up on the television news, sitting in his armchair like a monarch on his throne. The voice-over pays tribute to his achievements. He gazes with seigneurial tranquillity while his visitors look smiling or poker-faced. Nowadays, there are more smiles than there used to be. Slobodan Milosevic, who used to be seen as a war criminal, is enjoying his rebirth as a Balkan peace-maker.

The Serbian president remains an enigma – just as he has always been. More remarkably, he remains a winner – just as he has always been, even when he had no cards left.

Following this week's announcement of a 60-day ceasefire, the new, peace-loving Mr

suggested: "He was ready to cash in his chips, when he was ahead. He's much more intelligent than Karadzic."

For the West, the attraction of the new Mr Milosevic is clear. Here is a strongman who was able to deliver on his promise of bringing the Bosnian Serbs to the negotiating table – and, still better, could negotiate on their behalf.

For the Serbs, the attraction is less obvious. A few years ago, as the Yugoslav war began, Mr Milosevic talked of all Serbs living together in one country – which was interpreted as the desire in effect for a Greater Serbia. Now, four years on, Serbs indeed look likely to end up living in one country – but not where they would like to be. Following the expulsions by Croatian forces from Krajina there are almost no Serbs left in an area where Serbs have formed the majority for generations.

Logically, this catastrophe should mean Mr Milosevic is seen as a loser at home. But many people no longer seem to care very much about the Bosnian Serbs, or even the Serbs from Krajina. In the words of Vesna Petic, of the opposition Civic Alliance: "A lot of lies are told about 'brother Serbs'. The solidarity isn't so great." What people in Serbia care about are the UN sanctions and the war.

The opposition press vividly depicts the misery of the thousands of Serb refugees who have flooded into the Bosnian town of Banja Luka with a few bundles of possessions. But Serbian television, the main source of news for most, is keen to look the other way. The official media trumpet an imminent peace and hold out the hope that sanctions may be lifted soon as Mr Milosevic's reward for delivering a deal. As one critic of the government noted bitterly: "Just wait – he'll get the Nobel Peace Prize."

Meanwhile, the unsolved problems pile up, with the Western powers holding different views as to where the mistakes have been made. British officials express unhappiness that Washington, in effect, gave the Croats a green light for "ethnic cleansing" in Krajina, in recent months. The Americans argue that the British reluctance to go along with tough Nato action may have prevented an earlier settlement. London and Washington blame the Germans for forcing the pace on the recognition of Croatia, in 1991. The Germans in turn insist recognition was needed to prevent more Vukovars, referring to the city that was destroyed by the Yugoslav army in late 1991.

As for what happens next, observers are divided into the cautiously optimistic and the deeply pessimistic. Often, a half-hopeful remark is immediately followed by a much longer list of why everything can still go wrong. One senior diplomat with experience of the Balkans noted: "It's not something you can prove. But I have a bad feeling. Everybody's so positive. I can't share it. I think this could just be a pause before the butchery begins again."



Milosevic: A winner even when he has no cards left

Milosevic has emerged strengthened, yet again.

Mr Milosevic rose to power by stirring the nationalist pot in the province of Kosovo, where there is an Albanian majority. In the early Nineties he encouraged armed Serb rebellion in Croatia and "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia – or to put it another way, he helped to defend Serbs from Croat genocide and Islamic fundamentalism.

When I met him in 1992, he seemed astonished that he might be regarded as a war criminal. He reacted as if he was hearing this extraordinary suggestion for the first time. He very much wanted war criminals to be prosecuted, he said: he was in favour of peace. When I asked him why Arkan, an infamous "ethnic cleanser", could live in Belgrade without being arrested, Mr Milosevic became irritable. That line of questioning was closed.

His insistence that his hands were clean was an obvious lie even then – and is now acknowledged as such. As another leading "cleanser", Vojislav Seselj, pointed out in the BBC's recent *Death of Yugoslavia* series: "Every time, it was President Milosevic who personally asked me to send my forces."

Mr Milosevic has regularly changed his political clothes. He broke with Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, last year. As one diplomat

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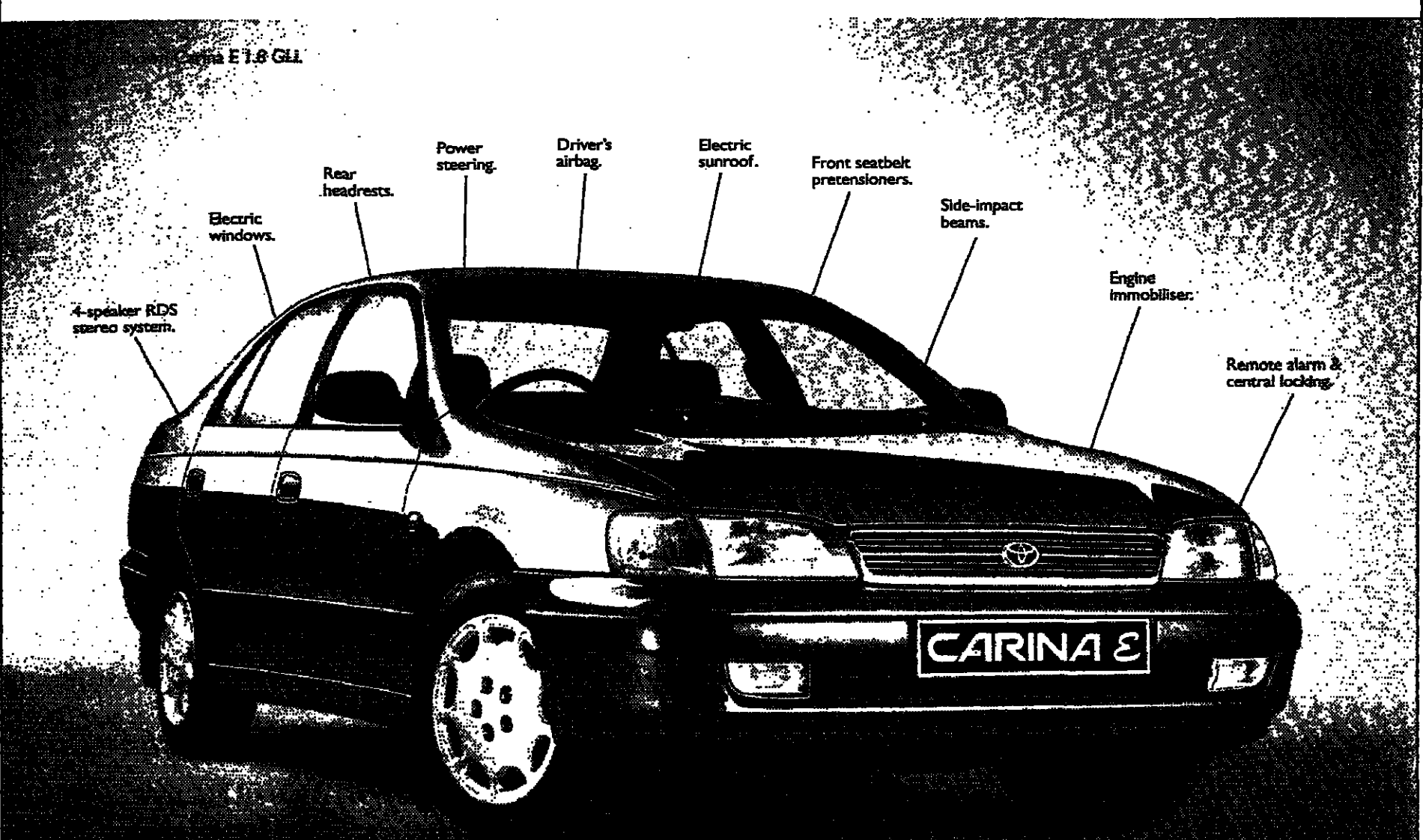
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international

Bhutto cornered by a city at war

TIM MCGIRK
Karachi

A businessman in Karachi was explaining the difference between the "page-three" photo-spread in Pakistani and British tabloids. "In England, you have pretty girls showing their bums, and I not correct?" he said, drawing curves in the air. "But in Pakistani tabloids we have pictures of dead bodies, ones that have been shot up and tortured. It is a pity we don't have the girls instead."

The businessman was looking at a page-three photo in a Karachi daily several days ago and happened to recognise the corpse, disfigured by bullet holes. "That was the bastard who snatched my car!" he exclaimed. On the radio the next morning the businessman heard that all of Karachi was to be shut down by a general strike to protest at the killing, by Pakistani security forces, of this "truth-lover". "To me he was a car thief and probably a murderer - anything but a 'truth-lover'," he said. "But this is Karachi."

The dead thief reportedly was an activist of the Mohajir Qumi Movement (MQM), which represents more than 20 million descendants of Indian Muslims who left their country after the 1947 partition to join in the dream of an Islamic republic in Pakistan. It was a dream from which they were excluded. Even today, the Mohajirs are dismissed as unwanted foreigners by many of Pakistan's native Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluchis and Pathans.

The leader of the MQM is Altaf Hussain, 41, who lives in exile in Britain. His neighbours in Mill Hill, north London, might well identify Mr Hussain as a recluse, a burly, mustachioed figure in baggy salwar trousers, who rarely leaves his home. And yet, from this genteel suburb, Mr Hussain can flex his awesome power over Karachi's 12 million inhabitants.



City in turmoil: A motorcyclist tries to pass a truck set alight in Karachi, where ethnic violence is spreading 'like a virus' Photograph: Reuters

With a single telephone call or fax, the benign-looking Mr Hussain can conjure up a strike that will close down Karachi's port, and every cotton mill, corner shop and watermelon seller in the city. He can stop its auto-rickshaws and buses.

And his MQM militants, with their Kalashnikovs and their rocket-propelled grenades, have turned parts of Karachi into battle zones, where the paramilitary police dare to venture only in armoured convoys. His activists can joyride in the BMWs of Karachi's scared elite, and nobody will stop them. Mr Hussain has the power to do just about everything in Karachi -

where more than 1,400 people have been killed this year alone - but he cannot impose peace.

Peace in the country's largest city depends on the Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. After stalling for several months, hoping in vain that her security forces would crush the MQM's network of armed militants and thousands of Mohajir sympathisers, Ms Bhutto finally may have opted to reopen negotiations. This weekend, the government's final proposals are being passed to MQM negotiators. Ms Bhutto's move is long overdue; not only have the government's brutal tactics turned the Mohajirs, who are a

majority, solidly behind the MQM, but Ms Bhutto's paramilitary police force in Karachi now has a reputation for being as deadly as the city's many armed gangs. Accusations of police torture, extortion and murder are mounting.

Until now, Ms Bhutto has given crossed signals to the MQM. Her promises of halting the "search and cordon" operations by police in predominantly Mohajir neighbourhoods have been broken. Also, an MQM leader who was to fly to London and brief Mr Hussain on the exchange of letters between the local MQM chiefs and the government had his

passport confiscated temporarily. An MQM spokesman, Shoaib Bukhari, said, "Benazir Bhutto is trying to buy time so that she can split the MQM and eliminate our leaders."

Before restarting talks the MQM are demanding Ms Bhutto agree to 18 demands, the most crucial of these being: that the government review the hundreds of allegedly bogus criminal cases lodged against their Mohajir leaders; that Karachi city elections be held (in which the MQM undoubtedly would trounce Ms Bhutto's Pakistan Peoples' Party); and that the 700 MQM activists in jail should be freed. "If the government's

reply is positive, we will resume negotiations," said the Mohajirs' chief negotiator, Ajmal Dehlavi. By giving more rights to the Mohajirs, Ms Bhutto knows she could lose her power base in Sindh, her native province. Yet if she does not, Ms Bhutto could lose not just a province but a country.

The army is worried that the lawlessness in Karachi is spreading like a virus throughout Pakistan. One senior air force general publicly urged Ms Bhutto to seek a political end to the city's ethnic fighting, and in Pakistan, which has a history of coups, when a general speaks, the prime minister must listen.

Nerve-gas trial looms over Japan

Richard Lloyd Parry in Tokyo looks ahead to another 'trial of the century'

As the trial of OJ Simpson reached its climax in Los Angeles, preparations were under way on the other side of the Pacific for Japan's own trial of the century. In three weeks, Shoko Asahara, guru of the Aum Shinri Kyo religious cult, will appear in court on multiple murder charges, including the sarin nerve-gas attack which killed 12 commuters on the Tokyo subway in March.

Like the Simpson trial, the Aum affair has become a national obsession, a daily staple of television and newspapers. But while OJ Simpson was pursued, arrested and tried under the glare of TV lights, the fate of Mr Asahara and his followers is largely being determined behind closed doors, amid contradictory statements about the guru and the plea he intends to submit.

Since his dramatic dawn arrest in May, Mr Asahara has been interrogated continuously about a string of grisly crimes attributed to the sect, including the subway gassing, an earlier sarin attack which killed seven people in a mountain town last year, and the murder of a lawyer and his family whose dismembered remains were uncovered last month. Tons of dangerous chemicals and guns have been recovered from the Aum commune on the slopes of Mount Fuji, and dozens of his followers have implicated him in the crimes. Few Japanese doubt that he was intimately involved in the planning and execution of the murders.

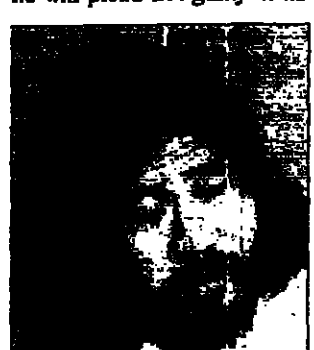
Thirty senior members of his cult have confessed to a part in the various killings. Fifty others face lesser charges, from libel to illegal gun-making, and a warrant has been issued for the arrest of Fumihiko Jojo, the chief Aum spokesman, for alleged perjury in a three-year-old gangster case. But, until now at least, the guru himself has denied everything.

That seemed to change this week, when Japan's public television network announced that Mr Asahara had confessed to all charges. The report was denied, not only by cult spokesmen, but by the National Police Agency. Then Mr Asahara's lawyer said his client had admitted to some, but not all of the charges.

"I thought I could prevent the sect's disbandment by admitting to ordering or agreeing to the acts," Mr Asahara was quoted as saying. "The sect's teachings are in danger of being destroyed. I was afraid of losing them, more than my own life." The key to the confusion lies

with a controversial piece of legislation, the Subversive Activities Prevention Law, originally drafted for use against terrorist groups like the Japanese Red Army, which carried out kidnappings and hijackings during the 1970s. The law is draconian, allowing the government forcibly to disband a group, seize its assets and ban its activities and publications.

It has never been invoked, partly because of the potential conflict with Japan's post-war democratic constitution which guarantees freedom of religion and association. But a panel has been convened to investigate the possible application of the law. According to Mr Asahara's lawyers, it is the threat of dissolution which has finally coerced him into a limited and vague confession. They insist he will plead not guilty at his



Shoko Asahara: values his sect more than his life

trial, scheduled for 26 October. Trials of lesser cult members began a month ago, and have proceeded briskly so far, as guilty pleas and expressions of contrition have been rewarded with light prison sentences, often suspended. The case has reflected badly on the police who suspected Aum of murder as early as 1989, but acted against the cult only after this year's sarin attack.

There are other pressures on the police to make Mr Asahara talk. This week, a manhunt was launched in mountains north of Tokyo for a pair of wanted Aum members, two of seven still on the run. The alarm was raised after the discovery of a makeshift camp, along with 14 bottles of cyanide gas - the same gas used in a failed attack on a Tokyo station in May. The possibility arises that Mr Asahara may stand defiantly in the dock while fugitive disciples are still at large with quantities of deadly chemicals - another pressing reason to secure his confession in advance, and publicly disgrace the guru in the eyes of his loyal followers.

Peking offers icon of Mao to a feverish art market

TERESA POOLE
Peking

In China's burgeoning art and antiques auction market, there are many questions no one wants to answer.

Which government department, for instance, is selling one of the most famous official paintings of Mao? This goes under the hammer today in Peking, estimated to raise more than 1.8m yuan (£140,000).

Where will Peking's cash-strapped Palace Museum find the money for its successful 18m yuan record bid on Thursday for the 1,000-year-old Song dynasty painting *Figures of Ten Poems* by Zhang Xian?

And, in a market where a pair of early 18th-century carved wooden wardrobes is expected

to raise at least 1.5m yuan, a Yuan dynasty ceramic pot is marked down at 2m yuan, and even modern oil paintings start at around 50,000 yuan, who are the mainlanders who can find this kind of money?

This week has seen auction fever in Peking. Three state-owned Chinese auction houses, Rong Bao, Hanhai and Guardian, have gathered some 2,800 artworks and antiques valued at around 200m yuan for a series of auctions which continue over this weekend. In recent days, Christie's and Sotheby's have held their first exhibitions in Peking, to encourage mainland interest in collections of ceramics and jade jewellery from outside China which will be auctioned in Hong Kong at the end of this month.

It is difficult to discover who these mainland buyers are, because with crackdowns in

China against corruption and tax evasion, no one wants to admit to having large amounts of spare cash.

Just as mysterious are the sellers. The 1967 picture *Chairman Mao Goes to Anyuan* was the most famous painting of Mao to be released during the Cultural Revolution. The image of Mao striding across the hills was reproduced on stamps, badges and 900 million posters.

Is the Chinese Communist Party now flogging off its propaganda heirlooms?

Ms Wang at Guardian said the majority of the paintings, ceramics, jewellery, rare books and furniture on offer at their auctions was being sold by mainland individuals who have

woken up to the increased value of family treasures.

Up to 300 people are expected to register to bid at the Guardian market and, judging by experience, more than half the buyers will be mainland Chinese. Ms Wang identifies three types of mainland buyers. "The first is corporations buying for the collection of the company. Then there are private individual collectors, and mainland art dealers. The buyers are mostly young and middle-aged, because these are the people who now have the money. A lot of them are in the stock market or real estate business," she said.

Lillian Chu of Christie's said: "The history of collecting is in the Chinese blood." Christie's and Sotheby's both have representative offices in Shanghai and say that, at their top end of the market, there are about 10

mainlanders who take part in their auctions outside China. "I believe that the trend is going to be that corporate art is going to start in China," she described the buying power as "quite surprisingly strong". In some cases prices have been higher inside China, particularly for paintings.

Chiang Lin-che, a Hong Kong furniture dealer, said most mainland Chinese buyers were looking for an investment. "There are a lot of people buying in China," he said.

"They want to make money rather than own art. They pay attention to the value more than why something is a good piece, or the history of the piece. In China the most frequent question is 'How much is it worth?'"

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Corruption inquiry launched over Juppé's Paris flat

STEPHEN JESSEL
Paris

Amid rumours of the imminent resignation of the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé, the French franc came under attack yesterday and prices fell on the Paris stock exchange.

His office denied the rumours, for the third time in six weeks, which were prompted by the disclosure that police had opened a preliminary inquiry into possible abuse by Mr Juppé of a previous position to allocate himself a luxury flat belonging to the city of Paris.

At this stage the affair stops short of being a major scandal but it is proving embarrassing and damaging to the Prime Minister. The political rumour mill has begun to grind out names of possible successors in the unlikely event that President Jacques Chirac feels able to do without Mr Juppé.

A collapse in support for the Prime Minister was confirmed by three opinion polls yesterday which showed that, in the space of a month, backing for Mr Juppé had fallen by 21 percentage points in one poll,

18 in a second poll and 16 in a third. They provided little comfort for Mr Chirac, whose own standing fell by 10, 11 and 13 points in the surveys.

Although tax increases, a public-sector wage freeze and disappointment over the failure of the government to achieve early economic success lie behind the steady drop in the two men's ratings, Mr Juppé is being further damaged by the controversy about the use of housing owned by the city of Paris. He appeared to have beaten back one legal challenge arising from revelations that he reduced the rent of a city-owned flat, let to his son Laurent, by Fr1,000 a month while in charge of the finances at the Paris city hall when Mr Chirac was mayor.

Prosecutors decided that since Mr Juppé himself had not benefited financially he had committed no offence.

But attention has turned to an apartment let to Mr Juppé, in a chic area of central Paris at a rent well below the market rate. Claims that he was not directly involved in the distribution of city-owned flats appear to

have been demolished by evidence from a city employee that Mr Juppé was closely involved in allocating flats, authorising repair work and setting rents. Renovation work worth Fr1.1m (£140,000) was done to Mr Juppé's flat before he moved in.

The case is with prosecutors who have asked Paris city hall for a number of documents, and called on the police to conduct an inquiry to establish the facts. The legal position is not clear, as any offence committed by Mr Juppé may be covered by a statute of limitations. He held the Paris job from 1989 until earlier this year.

Possible successors, should Mr Juppé step aside, are said to include Edouard Balladur, Mr Juppé's predecessor; Raymond Barre, another former prime minister, and, improbably, Charles Pasqua, a former interior minister. Another heavy-weight candidate would be Philippe Séguin, the speaker of the National Assembly, whose appointment would signal a decisive break with present economic policies and a marked shift to a Eurosceptic position. **Franc tumbles, page 20**



Dousing the flames: A helicopter drops hundreds of gallons of water, scooped up from the nearby Tomales Bay, in an attempt to quell a three-day blaze on the hillside above Inverness, California

New bomb on Métro injures 12

Paris (Reuter, AP) — A bomb exploded in a litter bin outside the Maison Blanche Métro station in south-eastern Paris yesterday, wounding 12 people. The blast coincided with the funeral of Khaled Kelkal, 24, a prime suspect in a recent spate of bombings, who was killed by police last Friday in the village of Maison Blanche near Lyons.

It was not immediately clear, however, whether the latest bombing was linked to six earlier bomb attacks that have killed seven people and wounded more than 130 in Paris and the Lyons region since 25 July.

The device used in yesterday's attack was similar to earlier ones: a gas canister loaded with nuts and bolts.

Two of those injured were in a serious condition. Casualties could have been worse, officials said, if a postman had not spotted a suspicious bag and alerted police, who cordoned off the area.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But officials have linked the bombings to Algerian Muslim militants.

Turkey's 'Old Wolves' win a share of power

HUGH POPE
Istanbul

Tansu Ciller has done it again, snatching victory from the jaws of political defeat and forming a minority government likely to see Turkey through to early parliamentary elections next year.

But Turkey's first woman prime minister was the first to admit that she had paid a high price to keep her post, a price that Western diplomats fear may damage the country's long-term prospects of rapprochement with Europe and hopes for economic stability under the latest IMF-imposed austerity plan.

"When I tell people about the events of the last days, they'll go into shock," Mrs Ciller told the *Sabah* newspaper. "I have come through an unbelievable game, I'm sorry to say."

Small scraps of political favour, it seems, were no longer enough to keep the old wolves of Turkish politics at bay. To muster the necessary parliamentary support, Mrs Ciller was forced to invite them to feast on what is left of Turkey's dysfunctional body politic. Bargaining reportedly involved not only policy commitments and ministries but also bureaucratic appointments and thousands of civil service jobs.

The 30-strong True Path Party cabinet will not take power before a vote of confidence next week, which it should get if Mrs Ciller resolves a strike by 350,000 public sector workers that has paralysed ports, railways and the sugar beet industry since 20 September.

But the political turnaround is already striking. The 1991 parliament that produced a centre-right coalition with Social Democrats promising to "turn

prison walls into glass" has delivered one of the oldest, most right-wing and narrowly nationalist administrations.

The crisis started two weeks ago when Mrs Ciller, 49, was forced to resign after the newly-elected Social Democrat leader, Deniz Baykal, walked out of her government. A natural successor coalition with the Motherland Party leader, Mesut Yilmaz, her equally youthful rival for the future leadership of



Tansu Ciller: Paid high price to keep her post

Turkey's centre-right, collapsed in a storm of personal insults.

Since then the patriarchy have emerged to wield behind-the-scenes power: President Süleyman Demirel, 72; the left-wing former prime minister Bulent Ecevit, 69; the Islamist leader Necmettin Erbakan, 69; and the right-wing leader Alparslan Türkeş, 78, whose political career began with agitation in 1944 to bring neutral Turkey into the Second World War on Germany's side.

Their re-emergence is extraordinary. These men's blinkered personal feuding in the Seventies led the country into terrorism, economic collapse

and the 1980 military coup. All four share a fearful view that the world is plotting to cheat Turkey and split it between Turks and Kurds. They voice suspicion of an important customs union agreement with the European Union scheduled to take effect on 1 January.

The European Parliament is due to vote on 14 December to ratify the free trade deal, but has demanded reforms, including the lifting of Article 8 of the anti-terrorism law, chiefly used to imprison dissident writers on the Kurdish problem, and the release of six former Kurdish members of parliament.

Mrs Ciller has vowed that her priority is to rush through the reforms, as strong as her determination to ensure that Monday's decision in Azerbaijan on oil pipeline routes out of new Caspian Sea fields is equally favourable to options wanted by Russia and Turkey.

The initial signs are that US support will help her out on Caucasian and even central Asian pipelines, but it will be another matter to enact domestic human rights reforms in the face of an old guard whose mindsets were cast in the Forties. Mr Türkeş, sometimes known as "the Chief Wolf", now holds the balance of power as he lurks on the edge of the government campfire. He sometimes speaks in favour of Customs Union, but is vague when asked if he has dropped his objections to lifting Article 8. On the problem of Turkey's 12 million Kurds, about one in five of the population, Mr Türkeş refuses to consider anything but a military strategy that has only escalated a Kurdish insurgency that broke out in 1984 and has killed more than 17,000 people.

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international

White anger spills over in aftermath of OJ acquittal

TIM CORNWELL
Los Angeles

The talk radio shows in Los Angeles still rang with white anger over the OJ Simpson verdict yesterday. At Nicole Brown Simpson's townhouse, a printed sign read "OJ Must Die". Nearby a lone woman protested with a placard that read: "OJ Simpson, wife beater, wife killer."

Five days after the former football hero was acquitted by a black-dominated jury of the double-murder of his white ex-wife and her friend Ronald Goldman, race still intrudes at every turn, from virtual shouting matches in television-show audiences to the letters pages of the *Los Angeles Times*.

In an interview with the newspaper *USA Today*, President Bill Clinton called on people not to use the "polarisation of perception" on the case to widen the gap between black and white. It would be a great mistake if "this became the beginning of some new division in our country", he said.

But a veteran television commentator on the current affairs programme *60 Minutes*, Andy Rooney, said yesterday he was so convinced of Mr Simpson's guilt he'd pay \$1m (£630,000) if another killer was found. Mr Simpson's acquittal was "the worst thing that's happened to race relations in 40 years", he said.

The fall-out from the Simpson case, beyond a nation venting its racial differences, is deeply confused. The Los Angeles Police Department technically is investigating mis-

conduct charges raised in the trial but its officers, and at least half the country, firmly believe they got their man.

The conservative presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan, who appeals most directly to the Republican Party's right wing, said the jury's vote must be accepted even if it is wrong.

Many whites seemed to take Mr Simpson's acquittal as almost a personal affront. Residents of the upscale and mostly white Brentwood neighbourhood, where Mr Simpson remained



Marcia Clark: Attacked jury for ignoring evidence

closeted behind the gates of his estate, were openly hostile. "Somebody who got away with murder lives down the street," said one neighbour.

One conciliatory note was sounded yesterday by Nicole Brown Simpson's mother. "I don't hate," said Juditha Brown. "Life goes on." After the Simpson children, Sydney, nine, and Justin, seven, spent a first night with their father, she said: "Blood is thicker than anything. He is their father."

But the prosecutor in the trial, Marcia Clark, let loose against the jurors who have angrily denied allegations that they ignored the overwhelming evidence of Mr Simpson's guilt. "Liberals won't admit it, but a majority black jury won't convict in a case like this. They won't bring justice," she told a reporter. The Los Angeles District Attorney's spokesman immediately said Ms Clark had been speaking off the record.

Mr Goldman's family, who have bitterly denounced Mr Simpson as a murderer, are determined to pursue a civil lawsuit for damages. The family's attorney said legal papers had been served on Mr Simpson to lay the groundwork for a case.

Mr Simpson's lead attorney, Johnnie Cochran, pleaded for the matter to be dropped. "I don't want to be a part of it," he said. "We played by the rules of the games they set."

Bitter feuding continued yesterday between members of the Simpson defence team. The legendary defence attorney F Lee Bailey let drop that his fellow lawyer Robert Shapiro, who has publicly split with the so-called "dream team", had once suggested a plea bargain.

Mr Simpson's friends and advisers went on a frenzy of damage control, saying he had never considered pleading guilty to a lesser charge, such as manslaughter. "From the moment all of us have been with OJ Simpson this man has persistently maintained his innocence," said Barry Scheck, one of the "dream team".



One creed: This Cree woman believes she is part of a distinct society that has every right to break from Quebec

Photograph: Sabine Pusch

'First Nations' want to go it alone

Ottawa — Concerned that they will lose traditional rights in an independent Quebec, two of the province's most prominent native groups, the Northern Cree and the Inuit, have seized on the French separatists' rhetoric about the right of self-determination to play an independence card of their own.

If Quebec has the right to

separate from Canada, they argue, they have an equal right to separate from Quebec and turn their substantial land mass into a province of their own attached to Canada.

As Matthew Coon Come, the university-educated grand chief of the Cree, has noted, the arguments to support an independent status for Quebec which are put forth by the Prime Minister, Jacques Parizeau, and his nationalist coalition — that Quebec is a distinct society with its own language, culture and land — apply even more so to the First Nations, as the native peoples describe themselves.

This week, the Inuit of Northern Quebec announced they would hold their own referendum on 26 October, four days before the general Quebec vote. The purpose, according to Inuit leader, Zebedee Nungak, is "to put Quebec on notice that the Inuit are not pushovers".

Mr Coon Come has also announced the Cree will hold their own referendum because only the Cree can decide for themselves what will happen to them.

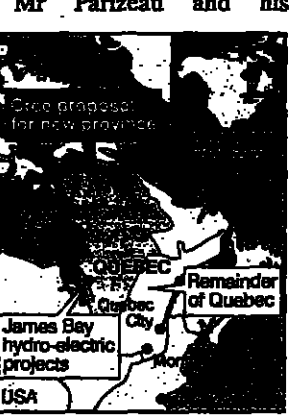
Together the 8,000 Inuit and the 12,000 Cree claim almost

Quebec's Cree and Inuit are turning the tables on separatism, writes Hugh Winsor

two-thirds of the north and western parts of Quebec as their traditional land. (There are about 80,000 natives of all groups living in Quebec.)

The Cree land is the size of France and contains the site for the proposed gigantic Grand Baie hydro-electric power dam, which has been opposed by the Cree on the grounds that their traditional hunting and fishing lands will be destroyed. Both areas contain valuable minerals and other natural resources.

Mr Parizeau and his



separatist partner, Lucien Bouchard, who heads the Bloc Quebecois Party in the federal parliament, have attempted to dismiss the native claims to self-determination, arguing that a sovereign Quebec would be indivisible.

But constitutional analysis supports the native side. Many claim they have never ceded their sovereignty to the federal or provincial governments and demand to be treated as "domestic nations". They also claim the right of direct access to the Queen, and her protection, without intervention from Ottawa — a right they say is based on treaties signed in the 18th century.

They have a point. Even one of Mr Bouchard's legal advisers wrote in an article for a law journal that "the native nations are in a position similar to that of the Quebecois when it comes to invoking international law in support of the claim that they have the right to self-determination." (The adviser was later dropped by Mr Bouchard.)

The question of self-determination is further complicated

by the fact that there have been several changes in Quebec's borders since Canadian confederation in 1867. There is a body of legal argument which maintains that should the Quebec separatists win the referendum, they would only be entitled to the 1867 Quebec boundaries.

The native debate seems to be only one of the separatists' problems as the official 30-day referendum campaign gets underway. Attempts by Mr Parizeau's government to stimulate nationalist sentiment — from an emotion-laden declaration of sovereignty to reports designed to show Quebec would be viable and prosperous — have failed to catch fire.

Mr Parizeau did make some conciliatory gestures towards the aboriginal population, offering some undefined form of self-government within an independent Quebec. But the native leaders were quick to realise he was not offering the kind of guarantees the native population now enjoys in the constitution. Nor did he offer to match the many health, education and welfare programmes now provided to the native peoples by Ottawa.



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FROM GREENE KING



Papal rebuke for America's absent fathers

DAVID USBORNE
New York

In a football stadium, at a race-track and today on the Great Lawn of Central Park, Pope John Paul is returning the adoration of New York's Catholic flock with plain-spoken admonitions on the disintegration of American society.

At a mass celebrated yesterday in the open sweeps of the Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens, the Pope at times sounded more like a candidate for the Republican right than a messenger of the gospel, decrying the collapse of the family and the failure of fathers to take responsibility for their children.

And in tones that to some might have seemed almost mocking, he noted yesterday that while New York presents itself to the world as the "zenith" of civilisation, the city has all but abandoned the weak, the disadvantaged and the unemployed.

"Not everyone here is powerful. Not everyone here is rich. In fact, America's sometimes extravagant affluence often conceals much hardship and poverty," he declared. "Have the people living in this huge metropolis lost sight of the blessings which belong to the poor in spirit?"

The Pope's reference to absent fathers may have been prompted by statistics released this week showing that, for the first time, more than half of New York's children are being born into single-mother families.

Prompting applause around the race-track, he said: "Fathers of families must accept their full share of responsibility for the lives and upbringing of their children. Society must strongly reaffirm the right of the child to grow up in a family, in which, as far as possible, both parents are present."

The Pope, who has looked weary at most of his appearances, will, by the time of his departure from the Big Apple tomorrow, have touched almost every one of the rawest social issues in American political debate, including the growing resistance to immigration.

The opposition to abortion has become a central plank in the Pope's teaching, and is one of several issues on which a majority of American Catholics disagree. At Giants Stadium, in New Jersey, on Thursday night, he said: "When the unborn child is declared to be beyond the protection of society, not only are America's deepest traditions radically undermined and endangered, but a moral blight is brought on society."

Under a South African law dating from the days of white minority rule, any foreign company not using its trademark for five years could lose the right to use its name.

Soon after the fast-food giant opened its first restaurant in South Africa, a Pretoria Supreme Court judge ruled that a local businessman had a prior right to the McDonald's name. Judge B. R. Southwood, decided that the American firm had fallen foul of a South African law which insists that foreign firms must use their trademark or lose it.

The ruling could jeopardise foreign investment, boosted by the end of sanctions following all-race elections last year. "The United States is surprised, dismayed and concerned about the court verdict reached against McDonald's," the US embassy said in a terse statement.

The case will not stop McDonald's from selling hamburgers in South Africa, the company said. It will press ahead with construction, staff training, and development plans. The newly-completed Johannesburg outlet and another in Cape Town are due to open next month under South African franchises.

The dispute arose when George Sombonos, who owns the local Chicken Licken chain, went to court seeking to bar Mc-

Donald's from using its name.

Under a South African law dating from the days of white minority rule, any foreign company not using its trademark for five years could lose the right to use its name.

A new Trademarks Act was passed in March that brought South Africa's economy in line with international norms. Mr Sombonos, who has indicated he wants to open his own restaurants under the McDonald's name and use its trademarks, golden arches and all, filed suit before the new law's cut-off date.



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page 3

INSIDE STORIES

2 Death is always seen from the point of view of the bereaved. But, to be frank, it's the corpses who suffer the real outrage; they're the ones who're dead, after all.

9 There seems to be a notion that the countryside is a mere artefact, decorated with posts with leaves from garden centres that are stuck into holes in the ground

11

A new acronym is about to emerge kicking and screaming into the property world. Carla – the Campaign Against Residential Leasehold Abuse

13 Why shop at Heathrow and have the sickening realisation that everyone around you is heading for **Kampala or Kiev** while your next destination is the kitchen?

ARTS & BOOKS

ARTS FEATURES
REVIEWS
BOOKS

ESCAPES

COUNTRY	9
GARDENING	10
PROPERTY	11

SHOPPING 12-13
GOING OUT 14-15
LISTINGS 14-15

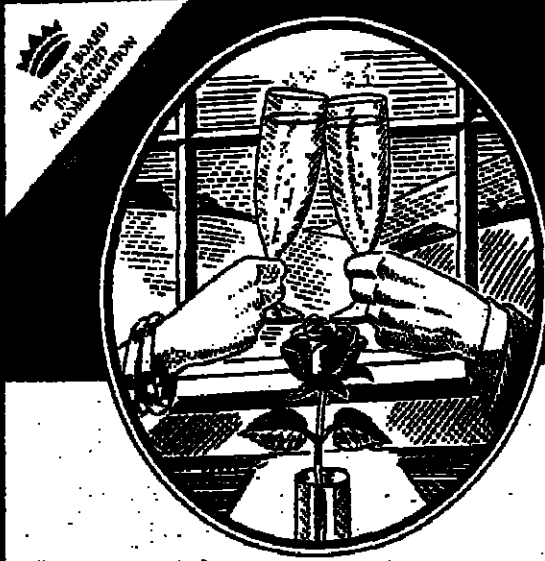
TRAVEL 17-20
MOTORING 21

MONEY

NEWS/FEATURES . . . 22-26
INVESTMENTS . . . 25

TV & RADIO

TODAY'S TV	28
SUNDAY	27
WEEK AHEAD	27



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Arts and Books

INDEPENDENT WEEKEND • SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER 1995



INSIDE STORIES

Dickie Fantastic
Could Ian Hislop
be the new face of
hair care
advertising?
page 4

The week in review



So what's the
problem with
kd lang?
page 4

Eco illogical
Robert Winder
reviews the latest
epic from
everyone's favourite
Italian intellectual
page 5

Iris strategy
Hugo Barnacle gets
lost in the
Murdoch Zone
page 5

Sound and fury
Know your
William Faulkner
without actually
reading him
page 6

I have had builders in for the past few weeks, tearing out an old kitchen and installing a new one. The experience, as anyone who's ever had building work done, is an odd combination of fine judgements and frustration. Will it look better if that gap is four millimetres rather than two? Does Mellow Sage offer any chromatic advantage over Hunter or Lichen Green? Will the emotional effect of the whole work (*Domestic Interior without Figures*, Mixed Media, 1995) be ruined by the wrong door-knob? You cannot rush such decisions – they require agitated conferences, test samples, crouching down, eyeing up, standing back. At the same time, the impatience with delay

'The finished product exists in the mind, but reality crawls towards consummation, stopping now and then for a tea break'

grows daily. The finished product exists in the mind, but reality crawls towards consummation, stopping now and then for a tea break. The experience made me wonder if such frustrations were experienced on more ancient building projects. Did Cheops grit his teeth as the works overseer explained that the suppliers had let him down again – they were six monoliths short and now the quarry was busy with an order for paving stones? Did the architect mollify him with soothing words? – "I promise you Pharaoh, it'll be finished by the time you die." Probably not, if only because Cheops had sterner sanctions available than a 5 per cent completion clause.



Tom

But there is plenty of evidence, coming closer to the present day, that the agonies of the contracted work of art are not unique to this century. The accounts for Westminster Abbey include an edict of 1252, in which Henry III ordered his treasurer and his master of works to cough up the necessary funds to get the workmen back on site. They had gone off to do other jobs when the money dried up. In his book *The Cathedral Builders*, Jean Gimpel notes that the restrictive practices of Parisian plasterers at the end of the 13th century bear a close resemblance to the union

rules of American plasterers in the 1970s – which suggests that the sites of the great cathedrals may have echoed to the sound of demarcation disputes and hotly defended perks. Gimpel also reprints a selection from the accounts of Autun cathedral which make for interesting reading. Much of it is pretty conventional: eight pounds and 16 sous to carpenters for oak wood cut in the chapter's forest; three sous and 16 deniers for the cost of lathing. But the odd item seems to hint at other matters. What lies behind "For treatment to a horse, five sous", for example? A good excuse, per-

haps. "Sorry gov, I can't get the tiles round to you because the horse did himself a mischief on that last load. If you can see your way to paying the vet, of course... well..." The more skilled the craftsman, the greater is their power. When Julius II got the painters in to finish off a chapel built by his predecessor Sixtus IV, he cannot have imagined that the work would take four years, even though his plans were grandiose. At first things went well: Michelangelo signed the contract on 10 May 1508 and started work on the same day. Work was immediately slowed by problems with mould, but in the face of this difficulty Michelangelo displayed a reckless disregard for conventional

practice. "I do not ask anything of the Pope," he wrote to his father, "because my work does not seem to me to go ahead in a way to merit it."

Things soon soured. At one point the Pope threatened to throw the painter off the scaffolding after asking when the work would be finished and receiving the offhand answer: "When I am." Michelangelo himself expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of some of the work because of the pressure on him to finish quickly. Which is why I shall greet my own builders – all Michelangelos in their field – with a contented smile and a cup of tea on Monday, even though they were meant to be finished yesterday.

Staring death in the face

'We can't handle death? Why should we be able to?' Tom Lubbock on a challenging exhibition at the National Museum of Photography



Top: two photographs from 'Cadaveri Eccellenti' (1894), by Max Jourdan, show fully dressed figures from Palermo catacombs; they are crumbling, but carrying on. Above: two of Rudolf Schäfer's from 'Portraits doux à la mort' (1983), which wear unresolved, transitional expressions

When people say, as they will, that for us death is the great taboo, I sometimes think well, at least we've got one thing right. We can't handle death? Why should we be able to? Or rather, who is this "we"? The death taboo problem is always seen from the point of view of the bereaved, something they need to sort out. It takes "us" as the potential mourners – never as the potential corpses. But it's the corpses who suffer the real outrage; they're the ones who've died, after all. The living will handle the situation somehow, and generally go on living. But much good their solemn obsequies, fond memories and healing processes will do us dead.

True, the dead aren't around to complain. But even in the past, one can feel the dead's presence. The figure on the Donor Card, "I want someone to look after me," seems to be a dead man, but his expression is so tentative, so life-like, that I don't want anyone to live after my death, might be a more candid declaration. And if the survivors insist on surviving, then a stunned silence, an embarrassed averting of the gaze, is the least you might ask of them. An evasion of the dead, often seen as a taboo to be overcome, may be only a proper recognition of what, dead, you could well want.

"The Dead" is the name of a show at Bradford's National Museum of Photography, Film and Television. It has work by 28 photographers from many countries, most of it very recent – there's been a lot of death stuff lately – though some archive material is included. Its subject is our attitudes to the dead, to their loss and their remains. Its images are often dismaying, sometimes shocking. Its general thought is that we'd do well to face these matters more directly.

Again, though, the viewpoint is partial. It takes the part of the living. The dead are the other lot, those we have such problematic attitudes to. We're addressed primarily as people who have the dead on our hands, not as people who might be dead ourselves. But looking at these images, it's well to take the view from the dead too.

The exhibition keeps its focus narrow, strictly post-mortal. Death's occasions and dramas – the public stories of war, disease, mur-

der – are minimally represented. The dead come at us head on. And since it's pictures we're dealing with, it becomes a problem about looking. Is it tolerable to look? Is it decent to look? Is it a duty? The camera does curious things with corpses. Rather than stealing souls, it puts them back. The photo's instant stillness suspends questions of animation to catch a look that might almost be alive. Max Jourdan finds fully dressed figures in Palermo catacombs, crumbling a little but carrying on. Annet van der Voort shows preserved heads in anatomical specimen jars, looking not dead so much as awaiting birth. Louis Jammes presents the contents of Sarajevo body bags as solemn Gothic statuary. All borderline cases. Rudolph Schäfer's gallery of morgue portraits couldn't be more provoking in the way they wear those unresolved, transitional expressions, where you can't but sense tentative signs of life. The intimacy here is a little disquieting, but in the end friendly.

But now put yourself in the corpse's place. We living may want to keep our dead half-alive, half with us, friends – but do I, dead, desire these imaginative attentions? Do I want strange life to be read into my flaccid or embalmed muscles, to become the plaything of other's fictions? To be dead is always to be spoken of behind one's back. The bereaved "want to talk". The deceased, with no part in this conversation, might prefer total anonymity.

There's much work too on the business of mortuaries, their grisly instruments and operations, bodies matter-of-factly opened up, greying skin, bloody sinks, a bin full of shredded tax forms used for stuffing. In a sequence of pictures Krass Clement follows his mother's old body as she dies in a hospital bed, as it's stripped, autopsied, sewn up and finally fed into a furnace. This is pretty strong. Why am I looking at these "forbidden" things? (Why are they?) So as to be disturbed by them? So as to stop being disturbed by them? To fully face and fully accept physical facts of death?

But here, too, the body's depressing fate signifies differently if you think of it as your own. The wish to have one's corpse cased in high explosive and blown to bits off the face of the earth isn't one I

wholly share, but I can understand it. Once you've gone, you might as well vanish on the instant, remove yourself utterly from the land of the living and its prying eyes. It may benefit the surviving, as a way of "coming to terms", to outstare their recoil from post-mortem operations. But the contrary impulse to look away needn't just be queasiness, it respects a natural desire of the dead to disappear.

"The Dead" offers some singular memorials, too. From Nobuyoshi Araki, a picture sequence of rather disgusting looking dishes prepared by his dying wife: the first half (in colour) shows those eaten before her death, the second half (in gelid black-and-white) those frozen and eaten after it. Belinda Whiting does an early reading book, using simple words and a large sans serif typeface, alternating with family album photos, to give a child-like account of her daughter's short life and death aged three; the naivety doesn't read false, but as though adult language had been knocked out of her by grief. Thomas Wrede stages a remarkable *trouville*: images of the impact marks left on glass by birds flying unwillingly into windows, ghostly but recognisable birdlike forms made of dust and blood – beaks and feathers register clearly – and magnified enormously.

Photography has often been drawn to ghosts, but as for any afterlife, the possibility is absolutely excluded in "The Dead" – except in the surrogate form of being remembered or preserved by the living. But the idea should be entertained, if only because it could be a way of picturing the missing side of the story, the point of view of the dead; a way of identifying ourselves with them also. We can only imagine ourselves dead by imagining ourselves slightly alive, albeit infinitely remote from all we were. Some sort of spook might allow this position to be represented, and it needs to be. Otherwise the dead become just figments of the living, involuntary characters in their stories, and our duties to the dead are only duties to ourselves.

'The Dead' is at the National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford (01274 727488) to 7 January 1996

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سورة الفاتحة

I've always wondered what could be bought for \$12m apart from an office building or a small hospital. Twelve very big ones will be the pay day for Demi Moore's next movie, which started shooting last month. It's called *Striptease* and, it will surprise no-one who has followed her career in the movies or the gossip columns, she is the star of a film in which women take off their clothes. But before we get to Moore naked, let's talk about the numbers.

Well, no; let's talk about Demi Moore first. The actress was in New York last week to promote her new movie, *The Scarlet Letter*, based on the Nathaniel Hawthorne classic. She has top-billing and looks like she's always been Hollywood's number one, the best-paid actress in Tinsel Town. Her dark hair hangs down like some rare substance found only on other planets. Maybe that's how she spends her money — buying impossibly exotic hair products at \$1m a bottle.

Fame-wise, Moore is *nouveau riche*. It seems she's been on our billboards forever but she didn't constellate until 1990, when she starred with Patrick Swayze in *Ghost*. Before that, there was *Young Doctors in Love* (1980) and the *The Seventh Sign* (1988), among a dozen other obscurities that now surface only in games of Trivial Pursuit.

So she struggled early on and posed nude for *Oui* magazine (1982), but who hasn't? Now she has super-suite status in posh hotels like New York's Regency and she can talk about all the money. So, can she confirm the hype? Is she Hollywood's best-paid actress? "That's what they say." She laughs and plays with her alien hair, shrugging her shoulders with a touch of girlish embarrassment. "So far, tomorrow may be different." She sucks her bottom lip between her teeth — something she seems to do when her answers won't quite come quickly enough.

That's Demi Moore — nothing taken for granted and always a little on edge. This is an actress with the most competitive instincts and she wears her wealth like she's had it forever. Her fame may be *nouveau*, but her style is not. In the luxurious surroundings of the Regency, she's dressed in soft blue jeans and a black knit T-shirt. There's a plain wedding band on her hand. A classy pair of diamond earrings occasionally glitter beneath her hair. On a gold chain around her neck hangs a matching diamond. When this isn't flashing, her eyes are. There is nothing ostentatious, and plenty that is graceful.

The huge sums she now earns may faze some people, but not Moore. She sees her pay days as a standard for other women. "The sum itself is inconsequential. The mark in time that women are finding an equivalent box office response to men is what's more important. The attitude changing is more important." In other words, she brought in the punters for *Disclosure*, not Michael Douglas, and she'll do the same for *The Scarlet Letter*. QED. Demi Moore gets the bucks and so should her fellow actresses.

It's hard to imagine who would dare to pay her less than a man, let alone suggest that \$12m may be too much. "The day that happened to me, when I got that deal, I was really grateful. It changed the business for all women." Moore says the fees for *A Scarlet Letter* and *Striptease* have set a new standard for female stars that the industry will now have to follow. "Tomorrow, it may be another woman earning more than me, and that's OK, because in turn, that feeds back to me."

Not to mention future Demi Moores like her daughter, who looks like she could already play her mother in the early scenes of *The Demi Moore Story*. Rumer Glenn is enjoying being with her mother in New York while her siblings are in Idaho with their father, Bruce Willis. She scampers around with Moore's PR people, a young kid in ponytails.

Moore has stressed repeatedly how much store she sets by a stable family. Her children often come on the set with her and she's been known to delay shooting if the children need her for something else. Moore says Bruce put it best when he told *Cosmopolitan* that everything else seems pretty stupid alongside the "beauty and joy" of having children.

It may sound like the familiar patter of phony PR-babble, but this isn't Moore simply doing the happy-families routine. Moore's father was a hard-drinking ad man working local newspapers across the western states. And she does not enjoy being reminded of those years. "Before I was 15, I'd never attended the same school for more than six months. When you change schools a lot, you



INTERVIEW

You don't get to be Hollywood's best-paid actress by acting coy. Just ask Demi Moore

By Dana Jeffery



don't really grow up with a strong sense of yourself. At one school, I'd be popular; at another, I wasn't." That must have been fine preparation for facing a movie audience, and Moore has put the lesson to good use.

There were times when the ambition almost fell apart. Moore got her first real notice in *Si Elmo's Fire*, a buddy picture in which she co-starred with Emilio Estevez. With typical *chutzpah*, Moore rode up for the audition on a large motorcycle. After the movie pushed her up a few notches in the Hollywood game, she entered a relationship with Estevez and became a serious party animal. That phase lasted as long as it took Columbia to tell her she had to get straight. Few stars have ever taken such advice as quickly as Moore. Her need to be a star seems to have driven back any self-destructive impulses.

At 32, she's raking in the loot and doing it for women everywhere. "I never thought 'being the best-paid' was something I had to achieve," she says. A bit more lip chewing, the sparkling eyes thinking it over. "I'm grateful that the producers were willing to show their faith in what I would contribute to the film by paying me the money. It was not only showing a belief in me but in all women and what they see women are beginning to bring to this industry." The \$12m woman pauses for effect. "And it has been a long time coming."

Moore is pursuing this theme elsewhere in movies that she says explore the lives women have to lead, women like her mother, maybe. *Now and Then* is a case in point. Moore has co-produced the low-budget movie as an essay in female bonding. Critics are preparing to dismiss it as a "chick flick". She repeats the phrase with a little menace: "Chick flick, hm." She puts a finger in her ear and scratches, another Moore mannerism when she's thinking. "I'm not offended by the description. But I'll tell you the big surprise — men love the movie."

The film stars Moore, Melanie Griffith, Rita Wilson and Rosie O'Donnell — although they all play second fiddle to the girls who portray them as 12-year-olds. "I think men will be charmed by the movie," says Moore, wanting me to believe and flashing a smile of enormous wattage. "Even though it's dealing with non-guy stuff like relationships, the period — the Seventies — really speaks to all of us through the music and the clips of old TV shows. Even though the guys are supporting players, they can all relate to the search for love and affection."

Some say *Now and Then* is an act of redemption for *Disclosure*, where her portrayal of hard-nosed super-bitch Meredith Johnson was criticised by several other leading actresses. If Moore sees herself as flying a banner for women's causes, she has yet to convince the likes of Michelle Pfeiffer, who remarked that offering herself to Robert Redford for a million dollars in *Indecent Proposal* wasn't going to do a lot to further the cause of women, or Meryl Streep and Susan Sarandon, both of whom criticised her characterisation in *Disclosure*. Moore defended playing the latter role, despite its obvious sexism, as part of her groundbreaking agenda. More cynical observers saw it as just another rung on the way to the big bucks.

She leans back and the dark cascade of hair ripples over her shoulders. Now I see why English director Roland Joffe had to have her for Hester Prynne, the outcast heroine of *The Scarlet Letter*. "Her face was beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion," wrote Nathaniel Hawthorne, describing Prynne. "She has dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off sunshine like a gleam." There's no sunshine in this hotel room but if there were, Moore's hair would fling it against all four walls at once. Hair, however, will not save her from the critics lining up to massacre *The Scarlet Letter*.

Imagine if Quentin Tarantino came to England and directed *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* as a romance in which Tess did not hang and all her enemies were annihilated by marauding Celts. That's about the kind of liberty Joffe has taken with *The Scarlet Letter*. The ending has been radically altered from the book. Moore has a saucy love scene with co-star Gary Oldman that certainly wasn't written by Hawthorne, and native Americans massacre most of Prynne's foes. In the movie, Oldman and Moore both do some serious over-acting. Oldman has heard the criticisms of the changes and shrugs them off. Moore is much less relaxed. She feels compelled to repulse the charges as though her big salary makes her the poster girl for Hollywood's artistic values

— but then many have said *The Scarlet Letter* is her audition to become a more serious character actress. The reception the film gets is probably more important to her than Oldman.

"I think the book is very dense and not very cinematic," says Moore. "Had we been doing a TV mini-series, maybe we could have been more faithful." It's clear the rising flak irritates the actress. "We take the audience on such a sad and tragic journey of loss and pain that the ultimate message of Hester Prynne would have been lost if we'd stayed with the original ending."

Hawthorne scholars will bristle at the thought of a literature lesson from Demi Moore, but that won't stop her. Above all, she is growing into the confidence that comes with being the A on the Hollywood A-list. In her future, Moore sees directing and writing and plenty more movies. When pressed, she will talk about her relationship with Bruce Willis but only to say they are as steady as a rock.

Bruce Willis always looks like the kind of guy to shoot pool with and drink tequila and Moore looks like that's the kind of guy she needs. For now, it's definitely who she wants. *People* magazine put her on their "Ten worst dressed list" this year and she scoffed at them. "Bruce and I will not dress to the role people want for us," she says. "We're around our children a lot so we're not going to be in a tux and a gown the whole time."

And sometimes Moore will not be wearing anything at all, which brings us back to Demi naked. Pregnant and naked but for body paint on the cover of *Vanity Fair*, raunchy sex scenes in *Disclosure* and now a movie about getting naked for a living. Is she exploiting some of her more obvious assets? What does Bruce think? After all, they say Willis is a jealous guy. "I would never do anything that would embarrass either myself or my husband," she says. After that, it's a question of the context. "*Striptease* is a great political thriller but it can't be done without some nudity. That's how Carl Hiasen wrote it and this time we'll be faithful to the book."

She smiles. Moore is where she wants to be and now we'll wait to see how she exploits her dominant position. She knows she'll have to exercise careful judgement. The pinnacle she sits on now was once occupied by Kevin Costner, and he was not the first to show how gold can turn to dross.

DEMI CONSCIOUS: "I would never do anything to embarrass myself or my husband...."

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: Moore with Michael Douglas in 'Disclosure'

INSET (top to bottom): with her husband Bruce Willis (photo: Rex Features); with Woody Harrelson in 'Indecent Proposal' (Kobal Collection); and with Patrick Swayze in 'Ghost' (Kobal)

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arts reviews

television

Passengers (Channel 4)

Jasper Rees loses interest after three and a half seconds

Passengers is television for people with attention deficit disorder. The perfect slot for it would be 7am on Saturday morning, when most viewers who fit that description are tuning in. Unfortunately, its predominant areas of concern are sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, with a bit of organised violence thrown in. For the moment we still live in a society where these are not matters of burning interest to four-year-olds, so Channel 4 has cordoned it off in that area of its Friday night schedule where they are more traditionally aired.

The longest that *Passengers* allows any one shot to linger on the screen is approximately three seconds. Market research seems to have indicated that their target audience loses interest round about the three and a half seconds mark. After four they're yawning, and after five they're channel surfing.

So the editorial tactic is to keep it short and sweet: you flash a talking head on the screen, then show something else, preferably with not many clothes on, and then come back, then cut to someone vomiting or dancing or, for preference, both. Or you continue with the talking head, but film it from a different angle, usually a wonky or wobbly one. Most reports hop and skip so much they look like they were shot by a bare-footed cameraman on hot sand. Of course, some of them, like last night's stories from the Nevada desert and the Brazilian beach, genuinely were.

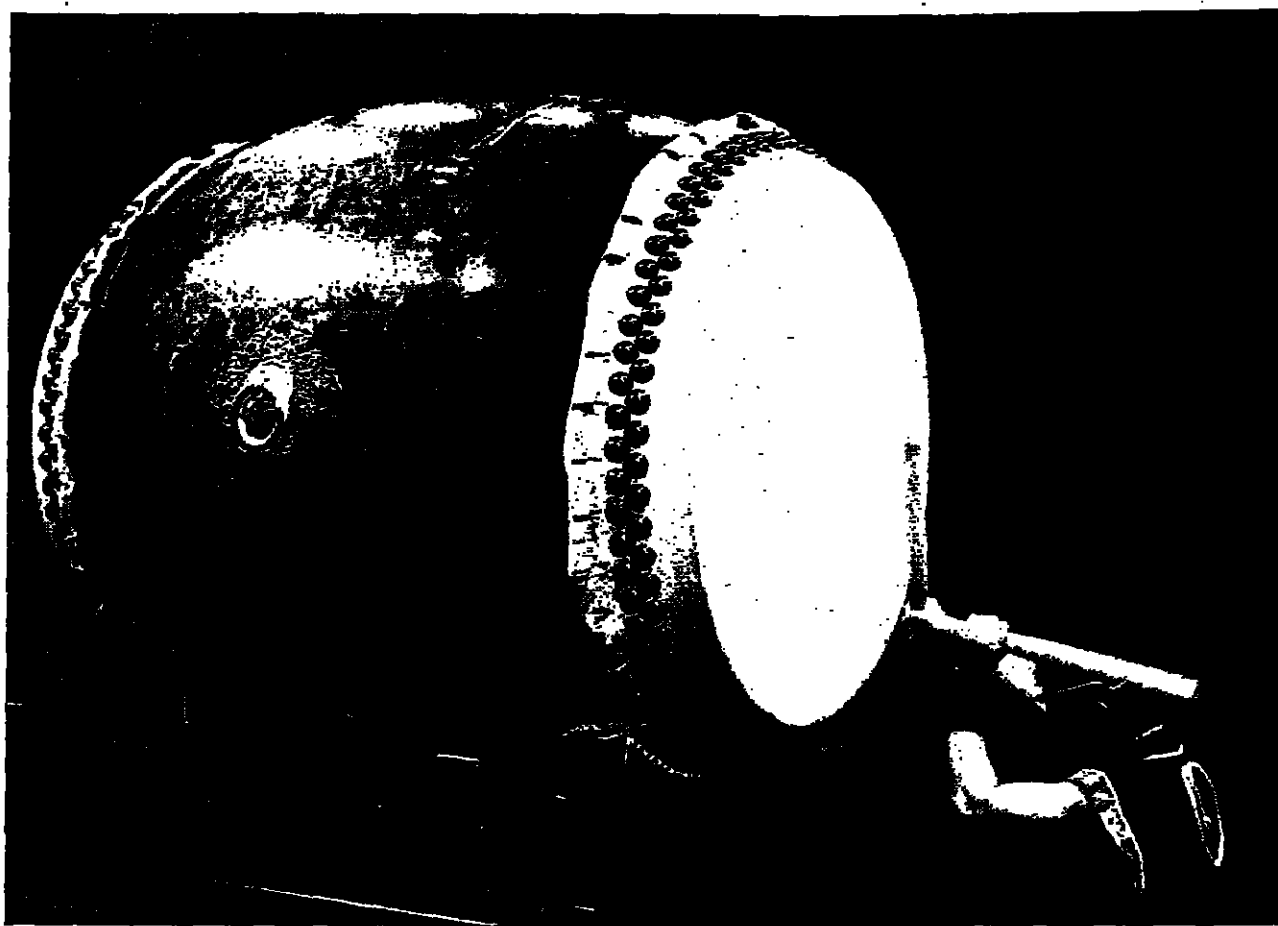
The hunt for items in which sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll and violence all dovetail means that *Passengers* frequently features rap artists. They particularly favour overweight ones, because they're the most jumpcut-friendly interviewees. Like Thunderbirds puppets, they don't move their lips when talking. Unlike Thunderbirds puppets, they're incomprehensible, so dubbing their voices over footage where they could be saying something completely different is not a problem: they're a cinch to sync. "Youknowadamsayin?" they keep on saying. In fact, the only time you know what they're saying is when they ask if you know what they're saying.

This week's fat rapper was ex-drug dealer BIG, also known as Biggie Smalls, or plain Christopher to his mom. *Passengers* has slightly less time for scepticism than *Play School*, but here was an exception. Watching Biggie's mother wrap the rapper on the knuckles for never calling her showed that the programme doesn't take its subjects at their own estimation.

Elsewhere, we were in Brazil for a piece about a marriage agency that introduces well-stacked babes to well-fed Germans. Not a difficult item to illustrate, this. On the beach we found sundry potbellied Teutons slumped on deckchairs and leering at basically naked Latin show-ponies who lolloped up and down the sand on bronzed haunches. This could have been a probing report, because a marital pact in which the man gets great sex and the woman leaves poverty behind is actually licensed prostitution. But if *Passengers* has a cultural ancestor it's those straitjacketed old Pathe newsreels: it finds the story, then refuses to tell the half of it.

music Wadaiko Ichiro Drummers, Hackney Empire

Big ones, little ones, whole tree-trunk-sized ones – if it's wood, they whack it. Martin Gordon's ears ring to the rhythms of the demon drummers from Japan



Ichiro Inoue, artistic director and founder of the Wadaiko Ichiro Drummers with the showpiece taiko drum

Photograph: Stuart Morris

The seedy grandeur of the Hackney Empire in London's East End makes an unlikely setting for mystical rhythms from the Orient but, as the Japanese saying has it, "Out of a gourd comes a pony", the metaphorical pony in this case being the vociferously athletic Wadaiko Ichiro drum orchestra from Japan.

Following on from last year's triumphs at the Edinburgh Festival and Sadler's Wells, Wednesday's show was the first in a gruelling two-month tour with a revised set. The curtain rose to reveal a stage strewn with drums – small ones, big ones, bigger ones and, dominating all, the monstrous 1,000lb (or near metric equivalent) taiko, carved out of a single tree trunk. The ensemble bounded on to launch into the first of a variety of virtuoso percussion synopses that used all the dynamic and tonal capabilities of the drums and drew upon the seemingly limitless power and agility of the 10-strong group.

An amalgam of apparent contradictions, the music of Wadaiko Ichiro sounds both utterly spontaneous and totally controlled, evoking primeval urges while coming on like some globalised Glitterband. Generous helpings of wit leavened the performance of these samurai of swing – the tiniest of pauses contained a snatch of Japanese folksong and a flung handful of petals, a brief lacuna before the two-fisted assaults upon the drums resumed. Dynamics had obviously been carefully thought out, both for individual pieces and for the performance as a whole – a mournful *shinobue* bamboo flute introduced a scene shift, a *shamisen* lute led the way for a taste of traditional red-wigged *bunshu* dance, accompanied by some

noh-style vocalising that thankfully (call me a philistine) avoided the drunken-Scotsman-like excesses of the *noh* theatre vocabulary. A delicate series of solo passages on assorted percussion, bell frames, Buddhist gongs and wood blocks presaged the final onslaught upon the three-metre tall taiko drums. The audience demanded four encores, which were provided with relish, ceasing only when the house lights went up.

The taiko drumming tradition dates back hundreds of years: first used in religious ceremonies, it has been liberated by such contemporary ensembles as the Kodo drummers and Ondekoza, of whom Wadaiko's leader, Ichiro Inoue, was formerly musical director. Finding their regime too strict (prescribed bedtimes and no women), he formed his own rival company based upon more eclectic lines and, indeed, Wadaiko Ichiro performances veer between stony Eastern inscrutability and *West Side Story*-style gang rumbles, conveying a distinct rock 'n' roll sensibility.

Another Japanese adage informs us, "Where there are geese and women, there is noise." There were no geese and only four women in the group, but Wadaiko Ichiro caused a serious commotion nevertheless. These high priests of rhythmic noise continue to thrash their deafening way around the UK for the next two months. From the sacred to the profane and back again at top speed, with maximum syncopation – not to be missed on any account.

Tonight 8pm Hackney Empire (booking: 0181-985 2424). Tour details on 0171-580 9644

jazz / film

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari

Phil Johnson on a silent film given the live music treatment – or vice versa

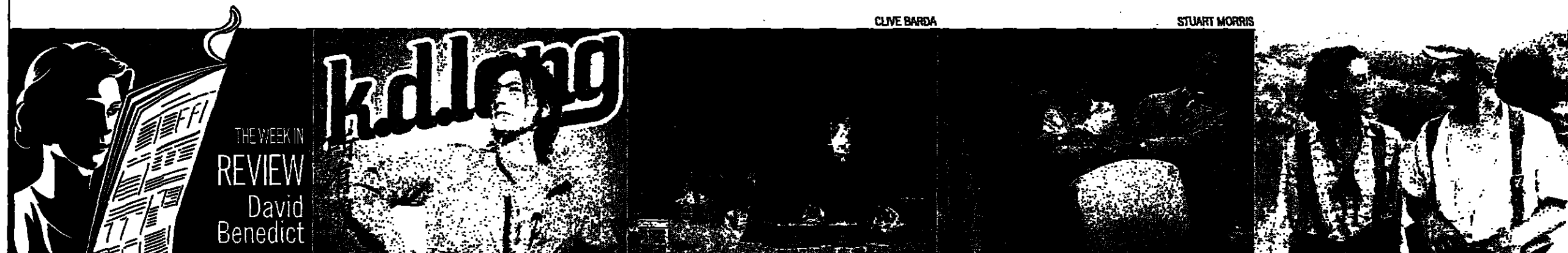
Though *Caligari* (directed by Robert Wiene, Germany, 1919) is a canonical film classic, ever present in the must-see lists of world cinema, one can't help feeling this is a view more honoured in the breach than the observance. Though it famously deals with somnambulism, it's also a film with an almost unequalled ability to send its own audience to sleep, and this was the first time in three or four viewings that I managed to stay awake throughout. Yes, the expressionist sets are wonderful, but for how long can one look at a set? The modernism of the décor is at odds with the Grand Guignol acting style, and the narrative is less driven than parked in a lay-by for most of the time. Wiene, one suspects, was no Fritz Lang, and the scratchy print and indifferent projection at Midlands Arts Centre did not flatter his masterpiece.

Indeed, at one point, the light of the projector burnt through the film and a frame melted before our eyes, like the apocalyptic (but pre-printed) ending of Monte Hellman's *Two Lane Blacktop*. As far as re-presentations of silent cinema go, this was a brand-new concept: as well as seeing the film and hearing a specially commissioned soundtrack, we could actually smell it, too. While the projector was switched off, we all turned and looked expectantly at the musicians. Would they improvise against a blank screen? Well, no, as it happens. They waited in silence until the necessary splice had been attended to.

The music, composed by the New York bassist Mark Dresser, accompanied by Michael Moore on clarinet and saxophone, and Denman Maroney on piano, was more diverting than the film. Unlike, say, the Matrix Ensemble's masterly accompaniment to Hitchcock's *Blackmail*, which is keyed to the relentless momentum of the narrative, Dresser's music provides a kind of atmospheric commentary on the text. This makes sense as the film is less dependent on narrative than the spectacle (such as it is) of the post-Cubist Gothic *mise-en-scène*. Cue, therefore, eerie noises of double-bass glissandos, wind-assisted squeaks and moans, and the plinky-plonk of piano wire to create percussive effects. Pianist Maroney spent most of his time under the bonnet of his instrument, tinkering with the engine of the keys and hot-wiring a series of disconcerting noises that sometimes sounded like fingers scratching down a blackboard. Moore, who was part of the wonderful Chusone trio with Han Bennink and Ernst Reijseger, was particularly fine, billowing up Brecht-Weill tango lines with great finesse.

In the few moments of cinematic climax, as when the somnambulist Cesare (looking worryingly like Robert Smith of The Cure) goes on the rampage, or the marvellous closing asylum scene, the music made a fittingly hysterical mood-enhancer to the images but, really, it was an unequal match. "Dresser 3: *Caligari* 1" would seem a fair estimation of the result.

Repeated at the Purcell Room, London SE1 (0171-960 4242) on Monday, 7.30pm

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KEY



overview

All You Can Eat is Kd's first album since the soundtrack to the disastrous *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* in 1993 and her first solo since her breakthrough best-seller, *Ingenue*.

critical view

Andy Gill was disappointed. "Inert, not erotic... immense natural talent is being squandered." Others disagreed. "The album's one failing is that she doesn't write pop tunes... but these are her most assured works to date," said Q. "A full-on, snog me now, mellow-man meltdown of orchestral quavering and blissed out pondering on the nature of love (and) sex," raved NME.

on view

Warner Bros 9362-46034-2. Alas, no tour for now.

our view

Whatever the reservations, *All You Can Eat* certainly beats Simply Red's *Life as album* of the week.

John Lloyd Davies's revival of Dvorak's flute and violin opera designed by Stefano Lazzaroni.

Edward Seckerson enjoyed it immensely. "A great production with a smashing performance from Susan Chalk, vigorously conducted by Richard Hickox." "Enchants the eye, excites the mind and makes the heart beat faster... it seems there is no opera so brilliant of melody," said the *Financial Times*. "Bewitching and overwhelming," claimed the *Guardian*. "Powerfully dramatic," thought the *Times*.

Further performance at the London Coliseum on 12, 17, 24, 27 Oct. Booking: 0171-632 8300.

One of the undoubted glories of the David Pountney / Mark Elder / Peter Jonas era at ENO, Go.

Paul Taylor's new work, *Blackbird*, is a dark, brooding, and deeply moving piece of music. It is a work of great power and beauty, and it is a work that is sure to become a classic of the 21st century.

The *Financial Times* said: "A work of great power and beauty, and it is a work that is sure to become a classic of the 21st century." The *Guardian* said: "A work of great power and beauty, and it is a work that is sure to become a classic of the 21st century."

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Spanish director Iñaki Eizaguirre's *Land and Freedom* is a powerful and moving work of art. It is a work of great power and beauty, and it is a work that is sure to become a classic of the 21st century.

Sheila Johnston praised it for sharing George Orwell's "commitment and anger, his warmth and humanity." "A living story of hopes and follies, tragedy relevant to the years after communism's collapse," declared the *Times*. "Directed with gripping immediacy," declared the *Financial Times*. "A stirring, informative film of considerable passion, power and intelligence," said *Time Out*.

Quint West End (0171-369 1722) and selected cinemas across London.

DICKIE
FANTASTIC
on the schmooze



You are about to witness a milestone in dandruff advertising

What you are about to see," begins Rowena, our hostess, with stern solemnity, "is not only a breakthrough in haircare advertising, but a milestone in haircare advertising in general." She pauses to allow this to sink in, and a flurry of expectation sweeps through the audience.

"In a moment," adds Rowena, dramatically, "when you meet our new Head and Shoulders celebrity, you will see what I mean. Lights!"

I never thought I'd find myself getting thrilled at a Head and Shoulders launch

breakfast. I had assumed that all the haircare advertising milestones had already been covered (waterfalls, frantic TV studios, fields of daisies, etc), so I can only surmise that the new Head and Shoulders celebrity must be someone astounding: perhaps a bald man – perhaps Ian Hislop. I turn to the others in the screening room. They are almost exclusively attractive young ladies from the hair-journalism industry – and I feel a little bit like the Ugly Person at the Good Looking Convention. I turn to the lady to my right. "What could this mile-

stone be?" I ask. "Well," she replies, "there have been rumours for weeks now in the industry. Some say that it may be... no... let's just wait and see."

The lights go down, and the advert begins. We are, it quickly transpires, in the decidedly non-milestone environment of a frantic TV studio.

"Live TV," begins a woman called Emma Forbes, "can be pretty nerve-racking, and what you don't want is the extra worry of something like dandruff."

She pauses while the camera sweeps majestically across the studio floor.

"Because," continues Ms Forbes, "cameras could pick up on dandruff." Ten seconds later, it is all over. "Ah," says the lady to my right. "Now I see..."

"What?" I splutter, confused. "What milestone? What?"

Then we are shown the advert again. This time, I keep my eyes peeled for milestones, but still no luck. When the advert ends, a smattering of applause breaks out. I clap along – not wanting to be exposed as the one person in the room too dumb to identify the milestone – and we are shown the advert a third

time. On this occasion, I opt for the lateral approach. What are the people in the background doing? What colour are the walls painted? But still nothing. Then the lights go up, and we are all invited to take breakfast in the next room with Emma Forbes.

I pass Rowena in the corridor, just as someone is saying to her, "Well, it certainly is daring," and take my place at the breakfast table. Emma Forbes is to my right, and I scrutinise her, just in case I pick up on an in-the-flesh milestone. "Well," says Rowena, "thank you all

for coming. Does anyone have any questions for Emma?"

"Well," begins a woman. "I bet you were surprised to be asked to do this advert, what with your hair being shoulder-length." "It was a bit of a shock," replies Emma.

I turn to the lady next to me. "You know that milestone," I murmur, casually. "Was it the shoulder-length nature of her hair, rather than the long-hair thing?" She laughs. "Yes!" she says. "What did you think?"

"Oh, nothing," I reply, a little sadly.

Blitzing the muse

DJ Taylor on the literary legacy of battle

Imagination at War:

British Fiction and Poetry 1939-45

by Adam Piette

Papermac, £10

Some large claims get made in Adam Piette's study of what he calls "the consequences of wartime isolation on the private imagination". The first turns up in the blurb, which suggests that the Second World War "represents" — it means "was", but never mind — "the most traumatic experience that British culture has undergone this century, and that the story of that crisis has until now remained essentially unwritten." It has? I seem to remember a long essay by Malcolm Bradbury, Andrew Sinclair's *War Like A Wasp*, Alan Munton's *English Fiction of the Second World War* and even Derek Stanford's fusty memoir, *Inside The Forties*, none of which appears in Piette's 11-page bibliography.

Piette's second claim deserves rather more serious consideration. This is that the war, fought on a scale and with an intensity previously unknown to the western mind, had a dehumanising effect on the literary imagination. In particular, the vastness, complexity and horror of a six-year struggle, fought on innumerable fronts, fatally injured the ability of the writer to turn it into art. Hamstrung by incomprehension, or simple ignorance, the typical literary sensibility, Piette argues, was reduced to a kind of piecemeal reportage, always liable to be channelled into prescriptive (and therefore inaccurate) treatments of what was essentially untreatable. In effect there were recognisable literary forms for dealing with, say, a fire storm, no variation on which could convey the enormity of the real event. Out of this gap between private experience and its public representation grew "some obscure gulf within British culture about its own isolation from the real horrors of the war" which has "traumatised" our post-war culture.

Post-war British culture certainly has its fair share of neuroses, but one wonders whether the link is quite so straightforward as this. Ominously, perhaps, Piette hardly tries to establish it. In a series of closely argued chapters on potent symbols such as the war in the desert, the Blitz and propaganda (where he adduces the existence of a "propagandized intelligentsia, islanded within false notions of fiction..."), his forte is simply a piling-up of the evasive and unsatisfactory responses forced upon art by conflict. Moving on to the specific, he has a good chapter on the theatricality of Evelyn Waugh's war fiction, and notes some telling linguistic links between Julia's spiritual sufferings in *Brideshead Revisited* and Waugh's own experiences in Crete.

While all this works well enough within the parameters Piette has set for his enquiry, it is hard not to feel that these boundaries are unnecessarily restricted. In his discussion of war fiction, for example, he confines himself to books written during the war, mostly by serving soldiers. This severely limits his source material — most soldier novelists (Anthony Powell is a good example) were too exhausted to write anything — and ignores novels from the home front by, for instance, JB Priestley, Pamela Hansford Johnson and Monica Dickens. Various arguments are jeopardised by overstatement, notably the confident assertion that before the war Evelyn Waugh "had never been serious about anything" (Waugh's letters after the break-up of his first marriage, his opinion of Catholicism and his book about Mexico suggest otherwise). Even reading Piette's line on the "complexity" of the war's assault on private histories, its tendency to make descriptions of warfare "completely inarticulate", and the idea that "the Blitz was too extraordinary for words" one wants to shout back that nothing is too extraordinary for words, because in the last resort words are all we have.

Above all, Piette's war/trauma link is overly reductive. One of the greatest traumas of post-war British literary culture was the suspicion of a gang of right-wing novelists that they had won the war but lost the politics. The great novel sequences of Waugh and Anthony Powell are exercises in teleology, in which the origins of post-war social change (or what Waugh and Powell assumed to be social change) are projected back into the Forties. Whatever the evidence to the contrary, Waugh believed that the Second World War turned England into a socialist holiday camp. Piette has some useful points to make, and his textual readings show a sharp eye for detail, but in its refusal to consider wider issues of this kind, his book is too self-limiting for its own good.

Yesterday's hills

Umberto Eco's new novel offers a tantalising conceit, a pageant of wars and a maddening conclusion.

By Robert Winder

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

No doubt about it, Umberto Eco is some kind of a phenomenon. In one bound — with *The Name of the Rose* — he brought semiotics and medieval theology to a mass market and became, in the process, the very image of a modish European professor. He could mention St Augustine and Walt Disney in the same sentence. Wonder of wonders, he brought a commercial twinkle to the ivory tower.

There are no signs of an end to it. No fewer than three sizeable new volumes by this prodigious Italian academic are currently on offer. There's a new novel — a bulky, meaning-of-life enquiry about a shipwrecked nobleman in the 17th century. There's a bold work of linguistic philosophy, *The Search for the Perfect Language* (translated by James Fentress, Blackwell, £20), which explores the history of the way the world speaks with reference to Genesis, Herodotus, Leibniz, Swift, Dante, Bacon, Descartes, Locke, Vico and (of course) many others. And as if this weren't enough, there's a trendy volume of essays on mass market culture, in which Eco the journalist dishes out opinions on such subjects as the abuse of rhetoric, the meaning of Charlie Brown and La Cicciolina (*Apocalypse Postponed*, edited by Robert Lumley, Flamingo, £6.99).

Scholars are quick to find his scholarship a touch frivolous and are happy to put him down as — horror of horrors — a "populiser". Literary critics, meanwhile, can hardly resist finding his fictions too preoccupied with windy historical lectures to survive as exhilarating dramas. The latter, alas, will not want for ammunition when it

The Island of the Day Before by Umberto Eco, translated by William Weaver, Secker, £16.99

comes to his new novel. A seafaring adventure crossed with a philosophical inquiry, it documents the last days of a European castaway called Roberto, who fetches up on board an empty ship just one tantalising mile from dry land. But the island might as well be on the other side of the world so far as Roberto is concerned: for one thing, he can't swim; and for another, it lies just the other side of the international dateline. Eco presents the time barrier as an obstacle every bit as palpable as the reef that lies between Roberto and safety. Those hills that seem so close are yesterday's hills (today they could be shrouded in mist); that great sunset is a product of yesterday's weather (today it could be pouring). Our hero is well equipped with telescopes — by a happy chance, the ship turns out to be virtually a floating research laboratory of 17th-century science. But he realises that to find out what is happening on the island he must wait until tomorrow. He is trapped, as it were, by time as well as space.

It is a nice idea, and we can see why Eco was attracted to it. As in *The Name of the Rose*, where a medieval Sherlock Holmes used his superior knowledge of logic and theology to hunt down a dark-age serial killer, Eco is able to ruminate, in the context of a life-or-death adventure, on the precariousness of human life and the arbitrary nature of human knowledge. But *The Name of the*

Rose could afford to digress in a way that the new work cannot. There, we had a murderer on the loose, and each excursion into classical thought was pregnant with possible clues. Here, there is not quite so much at stake. Roberto spends more time reviewing his life — an admittedly colourful pageant of wars, sieges, courtly adventures in espionage and love — than he does on his own particular predicament. As a result, the book feels more than usually like an account of something that has already happened. There isn't a feeling that things could go either way: it is indeed a painted ship upon a painted ocean, and after a while the adventure itself (which begins brilliantly) feels notional. The world of thought takes such priority over the world of action that even when Roberto is taking his first ever swimming lesson, the emphasis is not on the experience itself, but on a long debate to do with the rotation of the stars.

Actually, the whole business about swimming is seriously run. For some reason Roberto does not feel up to making a raft — the classic castaway solution. Instead, he laboriously learns to float. And here is what happens: "Two or three times he tried turning over, and he grasped a principle, indispensable to every swimmer, namely, when you have your head in the water, you must not breathe." It might be beyond the imagination of readers to believe that Roberto — who was adrift

for two days on a plank before attaining the relative safety of the empty ship — needs to learn that you can't breathe under water.

The novel purports to be an examination of the journal kept by Roberto as he stares out from his lonely vantage point in the Pacific Ocean. As a narrative technique this is very appealing. It allows the author to skip over absurd coincidences and lulls in the story with a scholarly smile, and encourages the reader to speculate freely. But it is a method better suited to brief, succinct parables. Eco loves Borges and Calvino, and imitates their quizzical tone of voice and eye for insoluble conundrums. They, however, knew that brevity was the soul of this type of wit. Unfurling at Eco-length, the mysteries seem portentous. "The story is as clear as it is dark," he writes. "So here I am," he has Roberto think, "illuding myself with the illusion of an illusion." And so on.

At the end, after 500 pages of philosophising, Eco can't resist adding one of those what-does-it-all-mean epilogues in which he points out, pseudo-mischievously, that it is all meaningless anyway. Roberto's manuscript, he admits, might well be merely "mannered exercises." His experience leads him to the conclusion that he is insignificant — a trivial compound of stray atoms — and this leads him to a proper appreciation of his true love. But Eco swiftly subverts this by pointing out that Roberto "did not have the makings of a philosopher". It is a dashing gamble to insist that what we have just read is, more or less, a waste of time. Readers can be forgiven if they don't laugh.

Stuck on the misery-go-round

Hugo Barnacle fights his way through the Murdoch Zone

In our world, it is a matter of record that the lesser country houses often changed hands, even during the gentry's heyday, and in the post-war period they were mostly abandoned, demolished or put to non-domestic uses. Those that survive as homes tend to be inhabited by business types. But in the Murdoch Zone, a world strangely like our own and yet also strangely different, none of this applies.

In the Murdoch Zone, there may be cardboard cities and congested motorways, but young Edward Lannion is still living at Hatting Hall as his family have done for centuries, and just up the hill his neighbour Benet Barnell is still master of Pennedean by the same divine right. Benet was a civil servant before he inherited, but neither of these gentlemen does a stroke of work nowadays except for writing never-to-be-completed books. Edward an historical novel, Benet a study of Heidegger. Both own, besides their country places, vast Kensington pads with, can you believe, off-street parking. Neither has a financial care in the world. Remember, the world in question is not the real one.

Even odder, from Benet's garden at night you can still see all "the innumerable crowding stars of the Milky Way", a feat rendered impossible anywhere else in southern England these 30 years' past because of the long-necked sodium lamps strung along every byway. And even though the local rector visits the

Jackson's Dilemma

by Iris Murdoch

Chatto & Windus, £15.99

parish only once a month, the Georgian rectory still belongs to the church, not to a car-phone salesman or a US diplomat.

The novel's plot concerns a bolter, a traditional figure in tales of romance among the quality. The girl doesn't literally leave Edward standing at the altar, but she does send a cryptic note, the night before the wedding, to say it's all off, and then vanishes. This is the cue for Edward, Benet and their circle to indulge in an operatic misery-go-round, with everyone blurting "I love you" at everyone else, weeping buckets and, inexplicably, debating the role of mysticism in the development of Western thought.

Virtually every character, we find, has been orphaned at an early age. This too was once a common device in popular fiction because it allowed bright young things the independence to have adventures. It derives from the childhood fantasy of parentless freedom, and lends this novel a deeply juvenile tone, which is reinforced by the writing style.

There are lots of exclamation marks, lots of italic emphases, lots of words and phrases placed in twee inverted commas for no good reason, and, at the end, after a rash of arbitrary surprises, when even the humble bookshop

assistant turns out to be a millionaire in disguise, there are lots of guest lists for celebration feasts and, no doubt, lots of jelly and trifle for happy-ever-afters. It reads like the work of a 13-year-old schoolgirl who doesn't get out enough, or else like a cruel parody of Iris Murdoch.

But who is Jackson? He is a supernatural being in the form of a homeless person who materialises one night on Benet's London doorstep, offering his services as a handyman, and taken on after many refusals. He has no first name, claims to be 43 but could mean 43 lifetimes, and allegedly radiates a mysterious charisma. Murdoch hints that he might really be Shiva, Caliban, the Fisher King, one of the Tibetan Mahatmas, Jesus Christ, or a reincarnation of Lt-Col TE Lawrence, DSO, late of the British Army Arab Bureau.

No, seriously. He could even be all of the above, though the scarring on his back favours the last two possibilities. His dilemma is whether to give the bolter, Marian, a note from her secret Australian lover which might wreck, or rectify, everything. In the Murdoch Zone, money may grow on trees, preferably the "centuries-old trees" of one's Capability Brown garden, but life still holds more questions than answers. "Where is the Ultimate and what is it?" asks Murdoch. "Where is Knowledge?" Certainly nowhere to be found in this book, which never begins to make the remotest kind of sense.

Transports of magic

Colin Greenland is hoodwinked by a novel of multiple illusions

In 1984, Christopher Priest's novel, *The Glamour*, reminded us that before Hollywood redefined it, "glamour" was a Scots word for a magic spell. A "prestige" turns out to be a technical term of stage magicians, meaning the effect of a trick, the rabbit pulled out of the hat. Nevertheless, he warned: "The central rule of magic always holds good — what is seen is not what is actually being done."

The Prestige looks as if it is going to be about a mysterious sect, whose founder, while securely incarcerated in California, has managed to make an appearance at a country house in Derbyshire. No sooner is that clear than, hey presto, it is actually about someone else: Alfred Borden, who, late last century, used to demonstrate the same ability nightly at 25 guineas a time. Andrew Westley, a reluctant journalist sent to investigate the translocating priest, learns instead that he is Alfred Borden's great-grandson, and that a portion of the misery of his life is inherited from the old man, and likewise from Rupert Angier, Borden's rival and arch-enemy, whose great-granddaughter now owns the house.

The narrative is a compilation of autobiographical documents from the principals in both centuries: the theme is duplication: replicas, impostors, adulterers. It is about self-deception and being in two minds. Even the feuding pair, as each later privately acknowledges, "might have made

The Prestige

by Christopher Priest

Simon & Schuster, £15.99

better collaborators than adversaries." Borden is the one who started it. Righteously disrupting a bogus but benevolent seance staged by the temporarily impoverished Angier, he accidentally injured the pregnant Mrs Angier. Ever after, Angier has dogged his career, spoiling his tricks.

Priest's plot employs two entirely separate supernatural devices, which perhaps is a shame, because it tends to suggest a universe of caprice and permeability that is the opposite of the locked, fatalistic cosmos he really wants to describe. All the same, the point is well made that Borden, the carpenter's son, has a natural talent which Angier, the aristocrat, can only imitate by artifice. Borden's most celebrated illusion, the trick that takes him to the top of the thau-maturgical tree, is one he calls the New Transported Man. Shutting himself in one cabinet, he immediately steps out of another 20 feet away, while the first collapses, empty. For his own version, Angier must commission a vast piece of machinery utilising the spectacular new power of electricity, and built by Nikola Tesla, who makes a bizarre guest appearance as a mad scientist in his lab perched above Colorado Springs.

As he has already demonstrated in *The Space Machine*, his affectionate if cumbersome attempt to unite HG Wells's *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds* in a single sequel, the 19th century suits Priest rather well. His repressed, often gloomy, style goes with the furniture (though it is hard to imagine a Victorian writing "two factors were pivotal" or calling something a "fire risk"). He contrives moments of the purest Gothic, as when Angier pursues his *doppelgänger* through the Pavilion Theatre, Lowestoft, or when the closed door of Borden's dressing room is penetrated by a haggard spectre clutching a knife. With its echo of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the final scene is magnificent, utterly alarming and genuinely moving. Only afterwards do you realise it has been foretold, literally (twice, of course).

Priest's mesmeric power is formidable. He is compelling in the way Ruth Rendell is, say, or more exactly Barbara Vine. His characters are eminently dislikeable, yet perfectly recognisable and deeply intelligible. He makes you gallop through the book simply to find out what possesses them, and what they will prove capable of. Even so, he requires you to remain alert, and rewards re-reading. "I have omitted the significant information," confesses Borden in his memoir, and though he is the least stylistically flashy of authors, concealment and misdirection are Priest's methods too.

books

Bung ho, old top!

Peter Parker finds anxiety, guilt and laughter in the correspondence of a lovable Laureate

"This week I had my fiftieth birthday," John Betjeman wrote in the *Special* in August 1956. "I started reviewing my past life, first through a magnifying mist of self-pity - never quite made the grade, not taken seriously in the *Times Literary Supplement*, Penguin Books, the Courtland, the Warburg, the Listener, the University Appointments Board, the Museums Association, the Library Association, the Institute of Sanitary Engineers. I thought of the many people at school with me who were now knights and politicians. I wanted to cry."

By the end of his life, Betjeman had undoubtedly made the grade, serving on innumerable committees, in constant demand as a journalist and broadcaster, knighted and appointed Poet Laureate. He may not have made it to the Institute of Sanitary Engineers, but Penguin eventually published a selection of his work. If other poets of the century have been more admired, none has been more loved, and it was rightly said at his memorial service in Westminster Abbey that his death had "eclipsed the gaiety of nations".

In spite of the esteem and affection in which Betjeman was held, and in spite of his propensity for epistolary ebullience ("Bung ho, old top!"), this second volume of his letters is darker than the first. Fame brought its own burdens, complications in his personal life brought anxiety and guilt, age brought illness and death. The popular image of Betjeman derives from his frequent appearances on television; a shambling figure in mackintosh and battered hat making agreeable tours of town and country, sharing his delight in England and Englishness. Although making documentaries was perhaps Betjeman's favourite job, the notion of him as an amiable *fleur-de-lis* with time on his hands is rapidly dispelled by this book. Candida Lycett Green even suggests that the amount of work he took on exacerbated the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease.

Much of this work involved correspondence: by the late Sixties he was receiving some 300 letters a week. He insisted upon replying to every one and employed a succession of secretaries, finding these among young women, with whom he shamelessly flirted, and members of the clergy who had been in a "bit of trouble". He spent as much time writing to "dud poets and self-pitying pests", as one secretary characterised many correspondents, as he did to architects, planners and other miscreants. "I have written thirty-three letters today," he once told his daughter, "which is why this one is so dull." I doubt that it was, for even the briefest notes reproduced in this volume are enlivened by Betjeman's zest for life.

As with all well-edited volumes of letters, Lycett Green's add up to a sort of biography. This second volume is particularly welcome since Bevis Hillier's authorised biography, *The Young Betjeman*, takes us only to 1933. The 50-year embargo placed on the poet's letters to Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, the woman with whom he shared much of his life after 1951, will undoubtedly hamper the task of writing about the older Betjeman, and Lycett Green acknowledges that the absence of these letters leaves a "chasm-like gap" in her own book. She has nevertheless managed to bridge this in her excellent interlinking narrative, providing a frank but sympathetic account of her father's parallel relationships with the two most important people in his life. "Naturally I was jealous when he first got fond of you," Penelope Betjeman wrote to Lady Elizabeth when she became concerned about her husband's health in the early Seventies. "But over the years I have realised that from HIS point of view at any rate it has been a wonderful thing for him, as you are literary and I am not really, and you have provided the sort of companionship he needs and never really gets from me." Although Lycett

John Betjeman: Letters, Vol. 2, 1951-84
edited by Candida Lycett Green
Methuen, £20

Green comments that "the arrangement worked well and ninety-nine per cent of the friends of all three accepted it", there is evidence in some letters of strain and upset, and it cannot have been easy for any of those involved.

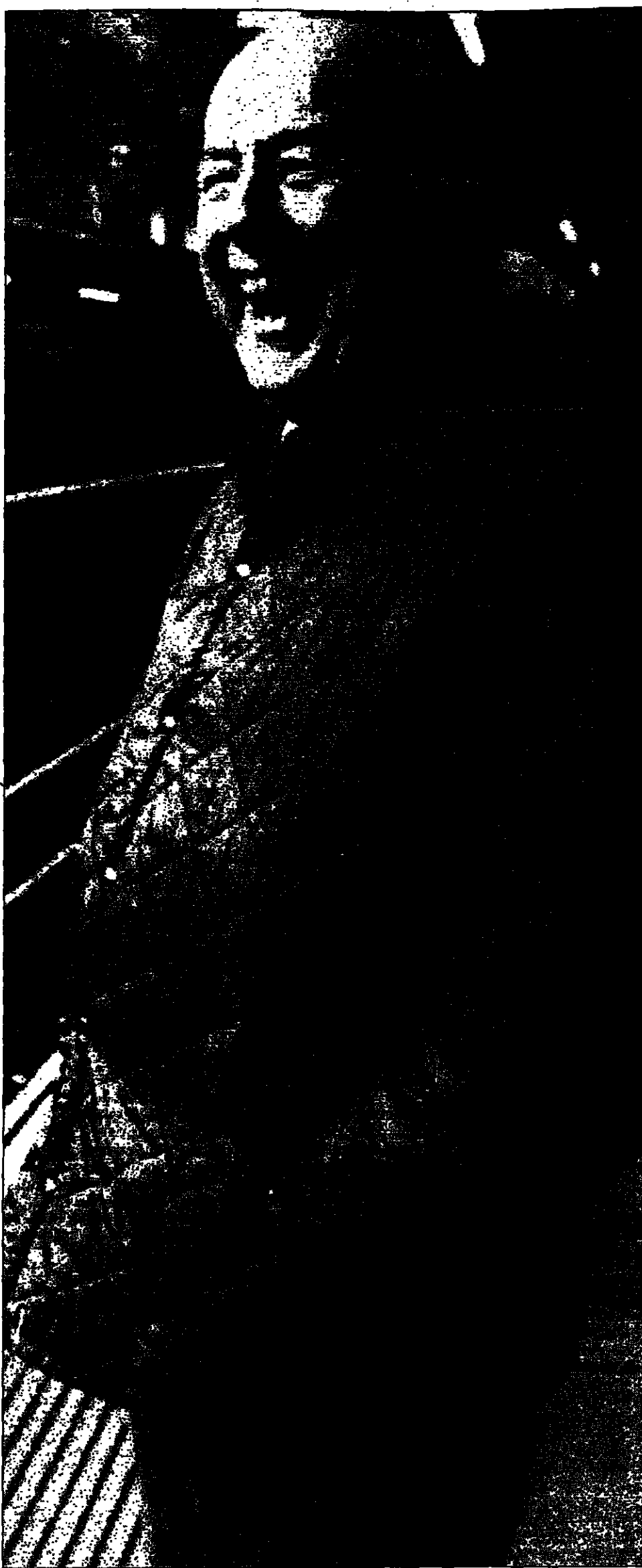
Certain aspects of Betjeman's life are beyond the scope of this volume, of course. Many letters to Mary Wilson are included, but they reveal little about this important friendship, which remains as it always was, "completely private". Mystery also shrouds Betjeman's relationship with his son, Paul, who appears to have gone to America at the earliest opportunity and remained there. "It was definitely harder for Paul to accept my parents' idiosyncrasies than it was for me," writes Lycett Green. "JB often behaved exactly in the same way to me as he did to Paul - but I took it to be the joke it was. I just told him to shut up. I don't think it was possible for my brother to do so." The only surviving letter to Paul bears bleak witness to the difficulties between father and son.

Candida Lycett Green's account of her father's increasing debility and death is almost unbearably moving. "He had a thing about going back to the pram," she writes, "and preferably being wheeled about by Myfanwy Piper." He ended up being wheeled about in a chair, and eventually died at home in his beloved Cornwall, with Elizabeth Cavendish at his side. "Stanley the cat asleep on his tummy", and his teddy bear, Archibald Ormsby Gore (archaeologist, strict Baptist, and very easily shocked), tucked under one arm.

In spite of Betjeman's private sorrows, the abiding memory most people have of him is of laughter, and there is a great deal of comedy in these letters, much of it endearingly silly in an Edward Lear-like way. His whimsical humour and his sheer exuberance have often told against him, particularly with people who assume that to be serious one has to be solemn. Niklaus Fevner, with whom Betjeman later had cordial relations, was initially anathematised as an exemplar of cheerful *mittel-European* scholarship. "It is no good trying to write a comprehensive, impersonal catalogue," he advised a contributor to his series of *Shell Guides* to the counties of England. "That is already being done in Fevner's *Buildings of England*, and does not tell you what the place is really like."

This commissioning letter is a model of its kind, as are his letters to the producers and directors of the many documentaries he made for television. "I don't think 'Telly' is an art," he wrote in 1964, "but it is good illustrated journalism and the more one can show people good buildings... the more there is an opportunity to make people use their eyes so that they can reject the flashily modernistic with which this country is afflicted. It is all one can do." That "all" proved to be a great deal - with his infectious enthusiasm, he probably made people more aware and protective of architecture and landscape than any one else this century.

Although Lycett Green's textual editing is occasionally fussy (expanding every emphatic "v" to "very") both underestimates the intelligence of readers and holds up the onward, effervescent rush of the letters), her footnotes are both amusing and to the point, providing a wealth of additional information. Betjeman represented a very English sort of amateurism in the original and best sense of the word, and it is perfectly appropriate that this engrossing and touching book should be a labour of love rather than one of dry scholarship.



John Betjeman: endearingly silly

Photograph: Graham Wood (Niklaus Deutsch)

All you need to know
about the books you
meant to read



By Gavin Griffiths

This week:
The Sound and the Fury
by William Faulkner
(1931)

Plot: In one of the most technically adroit and emotionally overwhelming American novels of this century, Faulkner uses four viewpoints to unfold a grim story of family self-destruction.

The first three narrators are brothers and each, in turn, mourns and rages at the loss of sister Caddy who has escaped the barren existence of the family plantation in Mississippi.

Benjy Compson is the "idiot" implied by the Shakespearean title ("a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury"). He has no sense of time or narrative sequence and his fragmented version of events shimmers with sensuous unhappiness; only the name "Caddy" brings him solace.

The second section moves from the present (1928) to Quentin Compson's last day alive, 18 years earlier. A buttoned-up Harvard freshman with a passion for order, his mechanical language expresses with neurotic precision his repressed incestuous desire for his sister. His yearnings are aggravated by her sexual promiscuity. Unable to return to an innocent past, he arrests time by drowning himself in the river.

Returning to the present, the mean-spirited voice of Jason Compson soaps his way through paragraphs of self-pity and recrimination. Like his brothers, he has never escaped the ossifying influence of his parents. Father Compson is a nihilistic drunk who twists his children to his emotional needs; Mrs Compson expends her energy cultivating minor ailments and brooding over the remnants of her respectability. Jason's response is to turn his spite on the departed Caddy and her abandoned daughter.

The final section is shared between an impersonal narrator and the black servant, Dilsey, whose ability to love unconditionally and to endure without complaint lifts her "above the fallen ruins of the family".

Style: Four "styles" recreate the mental pulses of the four different narrators, but underneath Faulkner cannot hide his natural prose which, like Hardy's, gains both strength and integrity from its awkward stabs at lyricism.

Theme: Faulkner called it "a dark story of madness and hatred". Peripherally, a demonstration of the Old South's desire to destroy itself, it is essentially a polyphonic dirge bemoaning lovelessness. The iron grip of the parents cripples all the children: Benjy needs Caddy as he needs sunlight and water; Quentin needs to possess her and extinguish the flame of her personality; Jason needs to revenge himself on his parents by destroying her daughter, Caddy, before her final sad escape, seeks love in pointless sexual liaisons. All through the novel, the shifting viewpoints enforce a sense of tense claustrophobia.

Chief strengths: As the fog of Benjy's monologue dissipates and the stark geometry of the story clarifies, Faulkner's vision has the numbing momentum of Arctic tragedy. He achieves the sort of universality in Mississippi that Hardy managed in Wessex.

Chief weakness: Although the indirect presentation of Caddy is artful, she is conceived a little too sentimentally as a "natural innocent".

What they thought of it then: Faulkner had difficulty appealing to a public that enjoyed the more straightforward nostalgia of Wolfe and Fitzgerald.

What we think of it now: Faulkner is admired in the States and in France. In Britain, he is associated with white colonnaded Southern mansions, with wisteria on the outside and hysteria within.

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Who's reading whom?

Christina Odone is editor of the 'Catholic Herald'. Her first novel, 'The Shrine', will be published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson in January



I've been hooked on Graham Greene ever since I read *The Heart of the Matter* when I was 21. At the moment I'm re-reading *The Quiet American*. All Greene's themes are there: fascination and horror at the trusting naivety of the Quiet American; the gnawing need

of his tough, cynical central characters to find life's spiritual dimension; and the recurrent questions: What is a good life? What is a good man? Writers today by-pass big themes and concentrate on verbal pyrotechnics, but Greene pares everything down to the essentials.

The Extremely Visible Man

Christopher Priest welcomes a new life of 'probably the most influential writer of the modern era'

HG: The History of Mr Wells

by Michael Foot

Doubleday, £20

Because he died before this century was half over, it's easy to neglect the idea that HG Wells is the probably most successful and influential British writer of the modern era. He has no current equivalent, and none seems likely to rise up in the next five years to take his place as pre-eminent 20th-century writer.

His achievements were immense. He had a vast popular audience for whom he spoke, who expected him to speak for them, and who of course gave him his constituency. He became the confidant and consultant of statesmen. He single-handedly created modern science fiction. He was the lover of some of the most intelligent, articulate and forceful women of the century. He wrote more than 50 notable novels, and twice as many non-fiction books and pamphlets. He inspired two generations of readers, and with his imagination gave his dreams to the world.

In spite of this, he is now remembered, outside the relatively small school of Wellsian scholarship, for much less: his early scientific romances, naturally; *Kipps* and *Mr Polly*; and, most likely through the medium of television, the film of *The Shape of Things to Come*. Some will recall a well-turned phrase or two ("the war that will end war" is one of his, as is "the open conspiracy").

Wells is a neglected writer and thinker these days, now that the sheer force of his personality is long gone from us. Who now settles down to read, say, *Joan and Peter*, or

The Holy Terror, or *Boon*... and who, if reading them today, can pick up the *claf* references, or appreciate the political positioning and the galumphing parodies?

Michael Foot, in this new biography, notes that Wells, to his dying day, was "a servant of truth, a champion of youth, and a man who could not live without the companionship of women". Of these, the first is paramount. Truth, and his quest for it, dogged Wells's intellectual life. Slave to him and master of him, truth constantly dazzled his vision, especially when he tried to be true to himself. It made him into a prophetic novelist (predictions of trench warfare, tanks, the atom bomb), a brilliant historian (*The Outline of History* is his masterpiece) and a crusading if eccentric journalist. But towards the end of his life, his unyielding obsession with the truth frequently made him sound like a crank.

"He was born in Kent, where Socialism was also born, and he was always happy to celebrate the association." Michael Foot begins his biography thus, using brisk and economical English of the kind we do not normally associate with his political utterances. In fact, the book is neither verbose nor divergent, and sticks remarkably well to

its theme of Wells as Socialist writer, his life examined through his books.

Wells grew up in Bromley, son of a cricketer and a housekeeper, later reduced to shop-holders. Throughout his childhood he was a voracious reader and he dreamt of the stars, but he was indentured at an early age into the dullness of drapery. He spoke in a high-pitched Cockney accent which he never completely lost. By sheer determination he got himself to Kensington Normal School, where he studied under Huxley, and soon after began not only his first love affairs but also his books. This year is the centenary of *The Time Machine*, not actually his first book but the one that broke through, made him famous and, soon enough, rich.

Other scientific romances followed, and to many people these are still his best books, but Wells was restless. In 1900 he took a step into political and social prophesying, with his book *Anticipations*, and after that he took himself much more seriously.

The particular insight Michael Foot offers is the way Wells would force an argument to express his ideas, and frequently seem thereby to be in dispute with himself. His books often came in pairs: the first would describe the perils ahead, the second would offer a prospect of overcoming the worst and moving forward beyond immediate danger. The doomsayer and the visionary were combined in Wells, a unique fusing of contradictions. In a similar way, his enlightened advocacy of

free love could be seen by cynics as a male wish to "liberate" women sexually for his own ends. When he was travelling to discuss world affairs with Roosevelt and Stalin, his critics said that he was trying to build a better world for the ordinary man, but treating the ordinary man as the ultimate beneficiary, not as a participant in the process.

The complexity of Wells's personality was much of what made him attractive to women. Rebecca West, who argued with him constantly about feminism, and with good reason, said in old age that she had loved him all her life and reproached herself for leaving him: "One had, in actual fact, the luck to be young just as the most bubbling, creative mind that the sun and moon have shone upon since the days of Leonardo da Vinci was showing its form."

A similar sentiment was expressed by Orwell, who remembered "this wonderful man" who told you about the planets and the bottom of the sea, while you lived in a world of "pedants, clergymen and golfers". That relationship too was a difficult and finally bitter one. The two great writers met a couple of times, Orwell unrepentant for his earlier claim that Wells could not understand the modern world, Wells convinced that Orwell had tried to poison him with curry and fruit cake. But this was at the end of Wells's life, when the bubbling creative mind was slowing. Foot clearly loves Wells and admires his work, and the wholeness of Wells is here.

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A voyage on the gong-tormented sea

Jan Morris finds the glitter and glory of Byzantium brought to life in a 'tumultuous' history

"O City, city, eye of all cities, cried the chronicler Nicetas Choniates in agony, contemplating the sack of Constantinople in 1204. 'Thou has drunk to the dregs the cup of the anger of the Lord'. A lament no less heartfelt runs all through this elegy for a civilization, the third and final volume of Lord Norwich's noble history of Byzantium. The book is full of pity and regret, is infused with a kind of worldly tenderness, and ends in a display of tragic glory when at last, on Tuesday, 29 May 1453, the Muslims storm the walls of Constantinople and put an end to it all - an end, in the author's view, to 'the most spiritually-oriented temporal state the Christian world has ever known'."

Not that the book is a gloomy read. Anyone who has ridden with Norwich through his previous tumultuous volumes will remount with pleasure for this last hack home. The pace is easy as always, and as we pass among the spectacularly varied scenes of war, intrigue, theological debate, marital kerfuffle, sacrifice, revenge, blazing ambition and lordly pride, our guide calms our passions with an infinity of curling asides and grace notes. It is history of an old-school, gentlemanly kind - no gimmicks, no show-off vocabulary, just a grand story told with true grandeur.

The narrative is unashamedly partisan. Lord Norwich vehemently disagrees with Edmund

Gibbon about the nature of Byzantium ("base and despicable"), partly because he considers it a genuinely holy organism, but chiefly perhaps because he so loves its art, its architecture and its learned culture - he believes the Anastasis fresco in the church of St Saviour in Chora in Istanbul to be "perhaps the supreme masterpiece of all Christian art". During the four centuries covered by this volume, the Byzantine Empire was almost incessantly under attack, from fellow-Christians as from infidels; I very soon fell into the author's habit of cheering on the Byzantines. The Muslims don't sound so bad, but the vulgar forces of the Catholic west, with their greedy half-literate princes and their arrogant Popes, storm and squabble down the generations like a pack of street-thugs.

I simplify, of course. The drama of Byzantium's decline is nightmarishly complex, with its constantly shifting cast of Bulgarians, Angevins, Seljuks, Germans, Bogomils, Pechenegs, Catalans, Turks, Sicilians, Mongols and hairy nomads. Norwich simply presents us with the facts, logically, chronologically, together with maps, genealogical tables and an apparently never-flagging zest. He can be forgiven for lifting, now and then, substantial chunks from his previous major histories of Venice and Norman Sicily: the wonder is that he manages to lead us through these historical tangles without ever once, not for a moment, being a bore.

Even the esoteric theological differences

Byzantium: the Decline and Fall

by John Julius Norwich

Viking, £25

which so disastrously divided eastern and western Christianity are explained with clarity and patience: the *filioque* controversy, for instance, concerned with the question of whether the Holy Ghost proceeded from both the Father and the Son, or from the Father only; or still more obscurely, the matter of the Hesychasts, and whether they could in fact, by techniques of meditation, see for themselves the divine light of the Transfiguration. In less fastidious hands these disputes could be incomprehensible or preposterous. Norwich makes of them interesting matters of politics as of faith.

Mind you, just occasionally the convolutions really are rather comical. I was nagged by a feeling of *déjà vu* when I read the footnote on page 263 warning us that the city of Magnesia mentioned in the text was "not Magnesia ad Sipylum, the modern town of Manisa near Izmir, but Magnesia on the Meander, some thirty kilometers east of Kusadasi: until I remembered a note in one of Beachcomber's columns years ago to the effect that the M'Hoho mentioned in a Colonial Office report was not the M'Hoho near Zanzibar, but the M'Hoho near Wodgi.

Lord Norwich will not resent the reference. His tragic story is enlivened everywhere with humour and surprise. Besides the towering figures at the centre of the narrative, the Emperors, the scholars, the theologians, the generals, a host of fascinating lesser characters is sighted along the way. There is Bolkan the Zhupan of Rascia. There is Hunyadi the Voivod of Transylvania. There is the unfortunate princess Adelaide of Brunswick-Grubenhagen, brought all the way to Constantinople, poor soul, to wed the future Andronicus III, and conclusively dismissed as "a German lady of insufferable tedium". Fifty-eight men called John complicate the index of this book, including nine Emperors, four Popes, three Tsars, five Patriarchs, two Despots, an ex-King of Jerusalem and John the Bastard of Thessaly.

But however amused and intrigued he is himself by this wild profusion, Norwich never loses sight of his great theme. We know from the start that Byzantium is doomed. For 400 years the Byzantines struggle to survive, harassed on all sides by Christians and Muslims alike, sometimes achieving victories, sometimes postponing disasters, but irretrievably weakening down the generations. The spectacle suggests the slow sinking of some mighty and indomitable battleship, fighting to the last, flaming in the dark as her magazines explode, her steering falls and the shells fall like waterspouts all about her. Cynics might say that nothing so became

Byzantium as its fall the 55 days of heroic resistance to the Sultan Mehmet II which ended with the last of the Emperors, Constantine IX, disappearing for ever from the battle as from history. "Byzantine" has become a word more often pejorative than admiring, and the notion of Constantinople as a heroic bulwark of Christian values is generally familiar only to the Greeks - to this day Tuesday is an unlucky day throughout the Hellenic world. Lord Norwich has taken upon himself to straighten the record, and to give the martyrdom of Byzantium its proper place in European history.

What he has done too, for me anyway, is to translate a dream into literary substance. The idea of Byzantium has haunted the western imagination for generations, but for most of us it has been hardly more than a drifting fantasy - a lovely arch or a lyrical mosaic, a dazzle of Klimt, a snatch of Yeats. Norwich's great trilogy has dispersed none of this magic, but has given it humanity too. Mehmet the Conqueror and Khairaddin the Torch of the Faith, the Palaeologi and the Hesychasts, in these pages we recognize them as fallible human beings after all, just like you and me.

Well, a bit like you and me...

Above: the Anastasis fresco in the church of St Saviour in Chora, Istanbul, 'perhaps the supreme masterpiece of all Christian art'

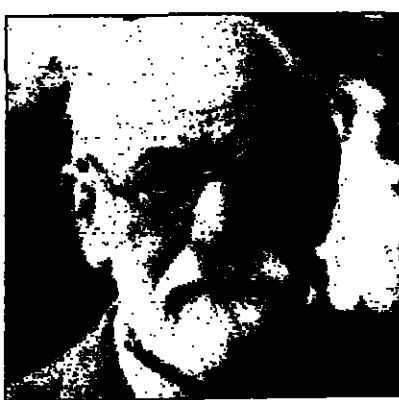
Putting new skin on original sin

Jerome Burne considers a comprehensive attack on the fundamental doctrines of Freud

This is a very superior demolition job. It's like going backstage after being held in thrall by a particularly elaborate gothic opera. The dramatic personae - Dora, Anna O, Frau Emmy and the rest whose case histories put flesh on Freud's theories - are not quite what they seemed out front. Carefully and relentlessly, Webster introduces previously ignored evidence to show that Freud's catch-all category of hysteria was a misdiagnosis for conditions as various as temporal lobe epilepsy, Tourette's syndrome and rheumatism. Not only that, but none of them was actually cured - Anna O, for instance, the "founding case of psychoanalysis", ended her life in a sanatorium, an addict and as disturbed as ever.

The imposing sets turn out to be lash-up jobs. The theory of dreams is full of holes - why do we need to have elaborate repression mechanisms to disguise sex when we dream about intercourse all the time? - while the Oedipus complex is upside down: in real life it is the children who are at risk from the incestuous desires of the adults. As for the director, his professional behaviour was appalling - rushing into print with claims about cures, both with cocaine and via analysis, that he knew to be totally untrue. Not to mention producing the most ludicrous plots - masturbation as a form of neurological poison and babies, faces and the penis being all one as far as the Unconscious is concerned.

If this is just what has been visible out front, the backstage machinery makes Heath Robinson look like a candidate for the design museum. Take Wilhelm Fliess, the one-time confidant and collaborator whose bizarre theories of links between genital problems and the nose - the cure was to snort cocaine - have always been something of an embarrassment. Psychoanalytic supporters gloss over him as an aberration but Webster



Why Freud Was Wrong:
Sin, Science and Psychoanalysis
by Richard Webster
HarperCollins, £25

ster shows how Fliess's pseudo-scientific theories - the cosmos explained in terms of the numbers 23 and 28 and so on - used just the same sort of infinitely flexible definitions and unsupported speculation that were such a distinguishing feature of Freud's own system.

Webster does a masterly job of weaving together a number of the recent revisionist accounts of Freud's work, most of which concentrate on a particular aspect, into a damning indictment. But this is only the beginning. Webster's sights are set on an even bigger target. His next step is to show how, far from being a radical and rational account of the wellspring of human behaviour, the central Freudian idea was very old-fashioned Judeo-Christian theology dressed up in new medical and technical clothes.

What Freud actually did was to re-

Sigmund Freud: wrong

package the doctrine of original sin, the idea that we are all split, with a higher self or soul and a base or animal half. Just as Christianity proclaimed we are all damned through our base half, so Freud proclaimed that we are all in thrall to the untamed desires of infant sexuality and the unconscious and only via the couch, five days a week, can we achieve insight and rational control. The religious dimension is fleshed out with an account of Freud as a messiah and a penetrating chapter on the complex parallels between analysis and the confessional - the analyst as the silent remote god of Protestantism, listening inscrutably to the outpourings of a believer.

But to see what he's ultimately aiming at, Webster has to take an even longer perspective and look at psychoanalysis in the context of European thought. This unconscious angel-beast division was not unique to psychoanalysis; was there at the heart of the Puritan Enlightenment and it now runs right through the scientific method. Out go feelings, subjectivity and the emotions while reason and the mind take charge. Original sin is alive and hiding in the laboratory.

Webster's thesis is that such a bifurcated intellectual apparatus will never construct a truthful account of human nature. However, there is an alternative, and it was provided by Darwin, whose theory, in direct contrast to Freud's, was based on a painstaking examination of what actually happens. Webster's plea is for a science of human nature that is not rooted in chimerical and unverifiable mental process but based on careful observation of how people - how parents and children - actually behave, that places them in society and in history.

This is a big book that covers a lot of intellectual ground with great clarity and verve.

Acid from the tree of life

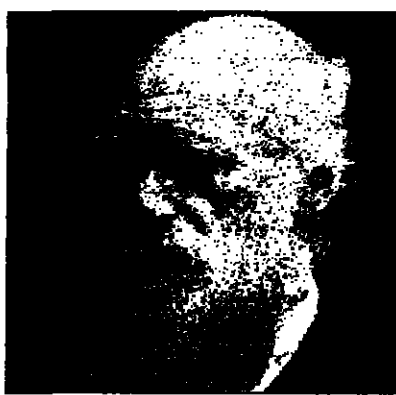
A new study of Darwinian theory strenuously defends the great evolutionist. By Ray Monk

Imagine an acid so corrosive that it could eat through absolutely anything. What would you keep it in? Glass bottles and steel containers would be no more use than paper bags are to hold water. And, if you came across a dollop of this "universal acid", imagine what a trail of destruction it would leave in its wake. Such a substance would present an enormous problem: nothing would be safe from it. Perhaps in time, it might destroy the entire world.

Such is Daniel Dennett's central metaphor for Charles Darwin's "dangerous ideas" of evolution by natural selection. "Bearing an unmistakable likeness to universal acid", he writes, Darwin's idea "eats through just about every traditional concept, and leaves in its wake a revolutionized world-view, with most of the old landmarks still recognizable, but transformed in fundamental ways".

Not that Dennett is appalled by this prospect; on the contrary, he celebrates it. For, unlike the fantasy of a universal acid, Darwin's dangerous idea is, he believes, demonstrably and unavoidably true. The danger it brings, then, is something we will just have to put up with, and what it destroys we will have to learn to live without. This includes not only the Biblical story of creation, but all ideas of a personal God, all non-natural notions of aesthetic and ethical value, and even any conception of human minds, human consciousness or human agency that is incompatible with the assumption of natural selection as the fundamental explanation for the "tree of life" in all its variations.

It is a self-consciously hard-line view, and one Dennett defends with all the considerable rhetorical power (and even charm) at his disposal. He writes well and can turn a phrase better than most contemporary philosophers. Moreover, he explains the often difficult issues



Darwin's Dangerous Idea:
Evolution and the Meanings of Life
By Daniel C Dennett
Allen Lane, £25

involved with a determination to be as clear as possible, which gives him a distinct advantage over his rivals. Against this, however, is the fact that the view he is advancing is one to which many people have a deep-seated revulsion. "Reductionism" is, to many, a dirty word, and the writers Dennett attacks - the zoologist Stephen Jay Gould, the physicist Roger Penrose, and the linguist Noam Chomsky - have found a large and receptive audience for their works precisely because they seem to offer, in one form or another, a non-reductionist view of the human mind, one that sees us as something more than the outcome of a set of blind, meaningless steps on the evolutionary path.

As Dennett realizes, he has his work cut out to convince us that nothing these - and other - writers have said makes any kind of dent in Darwinian orthodoxy.

Charles Darwin: right

He felt compelled to make the attempt, however, because he found that his own work on the philosophy of mind - which marries Darwinian evolution to cognitive science to produce a thorough-going materialist version of Darwinism - had, many felt, been discredited. Irritated at being regarded as insufficiently up-to-date, Dennett decided to meet the challenge head-on and refute, one by one, the views that try to "contain" Darwin's idea in order to safeguard something - our minds, our language, life's rich variety, or whatever - from its corrosiveness. In this way, the book might be regarded as a massive footnote to his earlier *Consciousness Explained*, one designed to ward off this powerful source of objections to his materialist theory.

In other hands, this might have been a rather tiresome exercise in polemical axe-grinding, but through a lively style, the use of inventive metaphors and the odd personal revelation, Daniel Dennett, for the most part at least, keeps his readers engaged and potentially sympathetic to his cause.

As a piece of popular rhetoric, the book's chief flaw is that its driest and most difficult passages are near the beginning, where Dennett explains his conception of natural selection as a series of "algorithmic processes", mechanical, step-by-step procedures of the sort of which a computer programme is made. He probably lingers too long on this notion for most people's taste, and not long enough on the reflections of the "meanings of life" promised in the book's subtitle. "Is something sacred?" he concludes by asking. "Yes, say I with Nietzsche. I could not pray to it, but I can stand in affirmation of its magnificence. The world is sacred." Let's hope that Daniel Dennett will in time provide another massive footnote, explaining what he means by this remark.

Watery draught of Vichy

Brian Moore's late fiction is anorexically insubstantial. By Christopher Hawtree

Contrary to popular belief, a reviewer prefers not to have wasted his time. How much better it would be if one could recommend that you rush out and buy Brian Moore's new novel, rather than that you catch up with the rest of his output. To those who know Moore's fascinating, sometimes elliptical early novels, there might be a residual curiosity in observing his persistence with the sparsely-told, unballasted thrillers which began four novels back. *The Colour of Blood* was effective enough, and *Lies of Silence* certainly kept one reading, even if it has largely vanished from the memory, as fast as did *No Other Life*.

With *The Statement*, we are taken to another thinly-detailed locale, this time France and the sinister aftermath of Vichy collaboration, something which government and Church alike find it convenient both to deny and to perpetuate. Alas, such chicanery

The Statement
by Brian Moore
Bloomsbury, £14.99

leaves one indifferent, for its agents are no more substantial than the mere initials allotted to hunter and hunted. In these pages, the man responsible for the massacre of Jews is no more real than a Klaus Barbie doll. How much more thrilling, how much more electricity there was to Moore's prose, when he did not set out to thrill.

One can pick out almost any of his novels as an instance of this. Even a lesser work, such as *Cold Heaven*, which turns upon a corpse reaching out, Hammer-like, for its wristwatch, manages to offer some metaphysical speculation upon miracle and reality as well as having great sport with the

contemporary clergy (never has golf been so sinful). Even better was *The Great Victorian Collection*, which that connoisseur of dreams, Graham Greene, read several times. Brief as it is, the myriad objects (replica? fake?) which a minor academic dreams into existence outside his Carmel motel, make for a farce which finds the space for greed, ambition, deceit, adultery: a shimmering view of the American scene, and more. Above all it achieves a novelist's most difficult task: the reader's immediate suspension of disbelief. America, and Canada, perhaps, find Moore at his best, as in the first-person narrative of *I Am Mary Dume*, whose deceptively *Cosmo*-style opening is transformed into a searing account of the Upper East Side ladies who lunch, the mundane enlarging upon itself, by way of psychoanalysis and sex, to form an empty well of horror.

These novels linger on the shelves, drawing one back, but it is difficult to say that much about *The Statement*. Here are such stock elements as a truculent café-owner, with a hint of Gordon Kaye about him, and exploding motor-cars. All this is offset by the occasional meditation along the lines of: "If I die tonight, will I be forgiven? Will God balance the things I did to save France from the Jew communists against my sins: women, the friends I betrayed, the hold-ups, the frauds?"

Alas, so perfunctory a narrative cannot bear these weighty, troubling considerations. Moore appears to be working against his own, variegated grain. It's difficult to resist the suspicion that he has been as ill-advised by his controllers in persisting in this vein as he was to pose for a cover photograph in a gabardine raincoat. Presumably, the intention is Maigret or Harry Lime; the effect is that of a man about to pull it open.



Simian, purse-lipped, stubble-chinned and by some way the coolest man in mid-Sixties New York, Lou Reed of the Velvet Underground gazes at the world with a stoned, amorphous innocence in the pages of 'The Velvet Years: Warhol's Factory 1965-67', a collection of photographs by Stephen Shore, a not-especially talented lensman who was nonetheless allowed to sit in on the avant garde toings and froings at No 231, East 47th Street, where Andy Warhol and his crew of set-dizant superstars yelped and

twittered and made terrible movies and some great music. The faces will be familiar to Warhol fans — John Cale, Edie Sedgwick, Nico, Paul Morrissey; some of the adventures recounted by the participants less so. Like the way the Velvet's drummer Maureen ('Moe') Tucker was invited to type out Warhol's novel, *A: A Novel* for \$50 a week, but refused to type the word 'fuck'. 'Oh Moe, you're not typing the curse words,' said Andy petulantly. They were, they discovered, both Catholics.

Darkness between the sheets

Harlem Renaissance author Dorothy West published her first novel in 1948. This is her second. By Marianne Brace

A small girl is missing. But no one in the crowd connects her with the child nearby, who is clearly lost. They know the missing infant comes from a coloured district, while this one is blonde and blue-eyed. Feeling foolish and embarrassed, someone finally asks the girl whether she is coloured. Shelby stares: "I don't know", she said after thinking it over, because she didn't. Shelby is born of a hundred years of inter-racial couplings, beginning with masters siring children on their slaves. Her own great-grandmother, Gram, is a nonagenarian Southern belle, living with coloured descendants who look white.

Dorothy West's *The Wedding* is set in 1953, in the Oval area of Martha's Vineyard. This is home to smart coloured society, and no family is smarter than the Coleses.

The Wedding
by Dorothy West
Abacus, £9.99

It's their daughter, the now grown-up Shelby, who is about to marry. Colour here is a social barometer, but the nuances of race are so subtle that the uninitiated "sometimes wasted an entire summer licking the wrong boot". Characters shade from honey through butter-nut to "black". Light skin tones are proof of good breeding, but secretly everyone craves something darker between the sheets.

The Wedding recalls Eudora Welty's *Delta Wedding*. The writers are absolute contemporaries — West was born one year before Welty in 1906. But in the prepara-

tions for Dabney's nuptials, Welty shows us the white South defeated but still beautiful while West lets us see what happened to its slaves once they were free. Like Dabney, Shelby is marrying an outsider — in her case a white jazz musician — causing minor shock waves to ripple through the black bourgeoisie. The embittered Gram has high hopes of this union, dreaming of a pure bloodline and burial in a whites-only cemetery. However, Shelby's mother feels her daughter is marrying beneath her; Shelby's adulterous father believes that because of him his daughter cannot trust any coloured man; sister Liz thinks the virginal Shelby fears the sex a dark man symbolises.

Flashbacks trace the Coles family history from its genesis in euphoria and despair. The ex-slaves work to better themselves;

the impoverished whites struggle to survive. Gram's daughter knows that "marriage to a man who could feed her was her only escape... The men with money were white trash, who had robbed the aristocrats of their sovereignty, and she would rather marry a coloured man who knew he was dirt beneath her feet".

Despite its big themes, this quiet novel never quite reaches epic proportions — though it has many of the characteristics of epic. It ends in tragedy and reconciliation, and also in something like wish-fulfilment: "Colour was a false distinction; love was not." There are many enjoyable insights into a world where washerwomen and cooks spawn professors and doctors. But West holds the reader at a distance, offering an invitation to a wedding we hear about rather than see.

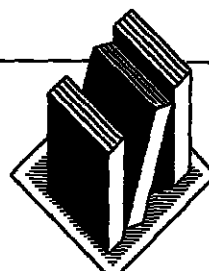
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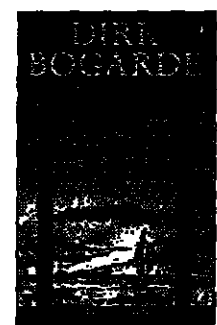
Starcarbon by Ellen Gilchrist
(Faber, £6.99)

Ellen Gilchrist's women live the American dream to the max. When they're not screwing cowboys, they're visiting therapists; when they're not snacking on fried chicken, they're drowning their talent in Chivas Regal. Gilchrist's latest update on the lives of the Manning and Hand families is a ride through familiar territory, but it lacks some of the edge which, in her previous books, made her such an astute chronicler of the rich bitch.



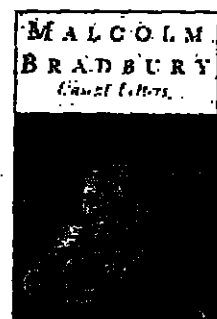
The Rape of Europa by Lynn H Nicholas (Papernac, £12)

With the exception of modernist works (despised as "degenerate"), Nazi bosses were obsessed by art. In occupied Europe, they indulged their avarice on a massive scale. Goering gathered over a thousand old masters (gratifyingly, the most valued were fakes), while the museum in Linz, Hitler's childhood home, received 8,000 works. Despite careful detective work, many items have never been recovered. A tremendous story, enthralling told.



A Period of Adjustment by Dirk Bogarde (Penguin, £5.99)

As the author is almost a fictional character himself, it's hard not to read a Dirk Bogarde novel without picturing him in the leading role. In this, his fifth novel, he appears as William Caldwell, an uptight Englishman who, when faced with the death of his youngest brother from AIDS and his own imminent divorce, falls in love. The resulting drama is played out against a suitably charming backdrop of Provencal farmhouses and Riviera hotels.



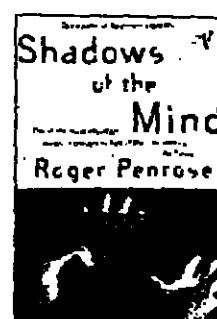
Unsent Letters by Malcolm Bradbury (Penguin, £6.99)

Mannered epistolary squibs, whose forced humour (eg "The Golden Bowl" by Henry James) is reminiscent of *Punch* at its creakiest, Bradbury's choice of targets — academic conferences, foreign researchers — is tired, and his tone annoyingly superior. Autobiographical fragments, such as making the front row ill by nervously niddling with the gas taps when lecturing in a science hall, hint at the book that might have been.



Virginia Woolf by James King (Penguin, £9.99)

The greatest achievement of Virginia Woolf's life, according to this sympathetic biography, was to stay alive as long as she did. Each day was a battle for survival, and she felt more confident writing her books than living her life. Her favourite topics — the destructiveness of men, the burdens of the past, and the fragility of life — not only cheered her up, but bought her enough time to become what she always wanted to be... the Grand Old Woman of English Letters.



Shadows of the Mind by Roger Penrose (Vintage, £7.99)

Hawking's Law of Scientific Bestsellers (sales halve for every equation included) is boldly ignored by his fellow mathematician. The first indigestible chunk of algebra occurs on page 28 and it soon gets worse. This work on the gulf between mind and computer makes scant concession to the non-scientist. And Penrose allows a distressing number of exclamation marks to escape from his formulae into his prose.

Escapes

INDEPENDENT WEEKEND SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER 1995

9
country



INSIDE STORIES

Be brutal

My garden is a jungle. What should I do? Anna Pavord advises
page 10

Get hip

As worn in *Pulp Fiction*: six of the best hipster trousers
page 13



Go east

Off the beaten track in the former Soviet Union
pages 18 and 19

Change gear

You can buy a supercar for under £20,000
page 21

Get out

Our regular guide to places to go and things to see this weekend
pages 14 and 15

The trouble with trees

Droughts, gales, pollution... they can survive all these. The big enemy of British trees is tidy-minded humans, says Oliver Rackham

One of the great summers of the century has drawn to a glorious close. It leaves behind, on Britain's wild trees, a profusion of fruit seen only once or twice in a human lifetime. Oaks and beeches hang heavy with acorns and beechnuts, crab-apple, sloe, chestnut and the rare service and wild pear bend beneath their burdens; hawthorn and rowan blaze with crimson and scarlet, hazels have so many nuts that the grey squirrels have not yet devoured them all. What has become of the woe, natural and man-made, that have afflicted trees in this century?

These woes make a long catalogue. In the 1920s drought and caterpillar plagues so ravaged oaks that it was predicted the oak had no future in Britain. Elm disease ravaged elms in the 1930s. Foresters in the 1950s thought it their duty to exterminate ancient woodland and replace it with planted trees. Farmers were encouraged to grub out woods and hedges. Elm disease struck again in the 1970s. Next came the great drought of 1975-76 and others in the 1980s, along with rumours of deterioration from acid rain. The great storms of 1987 and 1990 were followed by cleaning-up operations more destructive than the storms themselves.

Not all these are new – the Victorians grubbed out woods and were worried about air pollution and Dutch elm disease – but the 20th century has unquestionably been destructive.

Are matters worse in 1995? After one of the four great droughts of the century, the trees that are chiefly suffering are recently planted ones, which have not rebuilt their roots after being dug up; also beeches and sycamores, most of which are planted trees put in the wrong place. Among oaks, the great dieback of the 1920s was not repeated in the 1970s; although some oaks have fared badly in dry years since, 1995 looks like being a good year.

Many storm-damaged woods – where not subsequently ravaged by tidying-up – are full of horizontal trees which have now got used to the new direction of gravity and will be objects of wonder and delight for centuries to come. Trees whose tops were broken in 1987 have fared better in subsequent droughts than intact trees. Green walls of young elm again border elm-lined lanes; elm disease still smoulders on, but regrowth is usually gaining on it. Ancient woods, which 20 years ago I said were irretrievably wrecked by replanting, have come back to life as the original trees recover from felling and poisoning.

Acid rain has done many evils: nearly 400 years ago it was recognised as dissolving Old St Paul's Cathedral. But I doubt whether it has killed any trees in Britain since the decline of heavy oil as a domestic fuel 30 years ago. Nor is it

doing hidden damage: if it were, foresters would be complaining that annual rings were getting narrower year by year, which is not happening. Trees in the last century withstood air pollution more severe than any that occurs now. Studies on lichens show that rain in polluted areas has been getting steadily less acid. Epping Forest is now less polluted than when Battersea and Bankside power stations breathed fire and brimstone and steam locomotives puffed into Liverpool Street Station.

Much of the trouble lies not in the trees themselves but in people's expectations of them. The myth has got about that the countryside is a mere artefact, decorated with posts with leaves that come from garden centres, are stuck into holes in the ground, and last for a definite length of time before they succumb to "old age". Trees are not allowed to be themselves, living things each with its own agenda in life. They are expected to conform to the destinies that people foist upon them, and to the standards of appearance which people invent for them.

Writers define in advance what they consider to be a healthy tree. They decide that the normal state of any tree (unlike people or cats) is perfect health. When trees fail to live up to this standard, they declare that there is a problem, invent a cause and demand a remedy. The reality is that trees are mysterious beings that we can never fully understand. They are not immortal; they flourish from no known cause and often die unpredictably.

Many complaints about trees' condition concern trees that have been planted, rather than growing naturally. Every planted tree has been dug up and moved to a different site, a drastic operation from which it may never have recovered. Disproportionately many trees broken or uprooted in storms were the result of planting earlier this century – like the seven oaks of Sevenoaks, planted in 1902.

People who plant trees inevitably put many of them where nature did not intend that sort of tree to grow. When beeches wither on Cambridgeshire chalklands, Monterey pines topple in Cornwall, or Sitka spruce languishes in Lincolnshire limewoods, these are examples of nature getting her way.

I do not want to be complacent, but remind readers that trees are living things and often resist the assaults of nature and mankind. Human intervention can be counter-productive; trees often do not like having money spent on them. Tidiness is the enemy of young and old trees: the young are swept away under the name of "scrub", and the old are burnt as "unsightly" or suffering "disease".

We should not assume that by planting trees we shall recreate for the future the qualities we value in the trees of the present. Planted trees tend to be boringly identical and to lack the irregularities –



Despite the drought, 1995 has been a good year for oaks, like this one in Hatfield Forest, Hertfordshire

Photograph: Brian Harris

mossy crooked boughs, corkscrew trunks, burrs, holes – which make up the personality of trees, their beauty and value as a habitat.

In the 1970s the European Union introduced a regulation that young trees sold commercially had to come from certified seed sources. Everyone buying an oak or ash has to have one that is expected to grow into what foresters then regarded as a good timber tree, irrespective of whether that is what the buyer wants. Much of the significance of oaks and ashes is that they are all different, and it is time this regulation was repealed.

Ancient trees have traditionally been preserved in English parks as objects of beauty, veneration and delight. And they are something more: the home of creatures ranging from owls to rare beetles to rare lichens to mistletoe. They are irreplaceable: 10,000 200-year-old oaks are not a substitute for a single 500-year-old oak. The tidy-minded Continentals have swept away nearly all their ancient trees, and we should continue to cherish ours and to resist our own periodic fits of tidy-mindedness. We also have a duty to cherish trees in late middle age, such as oaks 250 years old, which will be the ancient trees of the future. Parks and avenues

should grow and develop, not be set back periodically to what they are thought to have looked like when new.

The writer is the author of 'The Illustrated History of the Countryside' (£25, Weidenfeld), which won the Sir Peter Kent Conservation Award and the Natural World Conservation Book prize.

A little local trouble

A weekly round-up of rural rumpuses

Plans for a new town in the East Devon countryside are being strongly opposed by local councillors. The county council proposes a town of 3,000 homes at a location thought to be at Broadclyst, outside Exeter. Their plan is in line with government proposals for 99,000 new dwellings in the county between 1991 and 2011, to accommodate people moving to the county and Exeter commuters. East Devon Council, and local conservation groups, believe only 79,999 homes are needed, which would avoid the need for the new town.

An elderly couple at Branscombe, Devon, had a lucky escape this week when a bullock tumbled down a cliff and crashed into the wall of their chalet. Charles and Doreen Jordan were watching TV when the cow smashed into the wall, dislodging the bath. The animal then ricocheted on to the beach, where it was found unhurt.

'Blinding yellow-white, the nearest of the pots are within arm's reach, yet they are in another world'



DUFF HART-DAVIS

I have always thought of potters as true country people. The clay they mould is the stuff from which we spring, and to which we must return, and contact with it puts them close to the roots of creation.

So it is with Alan Caiger-Smith, who not only has a show on in London, but also has just published an account of his own career and craft. The book describes how he founded a pottery in Aldermaston, Berkshire, in 1955, and how for nearly 40 years he struggled not only to keep afloat commercially, but also to master new techniques with which he became obsessed.

Appropriately enough, the pottery was housed in an 18th-century building made of soft red brick, itself baked clay. The working area was permanently coated in pale clay dust, and a rickety wooden staircase led up to the showroom – a treasure-chamber full of brilliantly coloured pots, bowls, mugs and jugs ranged on shelves that disappeared far into the shadows.

A small, wiry man, Mr Caiger-Smith lives in an ancient farmhouse close to the River Kennet, and his book reveals the joy he finds in working with his hands, whether throwing a pot, painting a bowl or merely splitting willow logs, which long experience has shown him are best for firing the kiln.

Along the banks of the Kennet, willows are grown commercially for cricket bats, but only the best sections can be used, and the potters were allowed to cut up and carry off reject pieces. In Mr Caiger-

Smith's view, willow makes exceptionally good fuel for firing earthenware, since it releases its heat quickly and burns with a long, soft flame, making a kiln atmosphere that gives a pearly whiteness to the glazes and luminous depth to most of the colours.

His description of firings reads like a chapter from a thriller. The process begins at 4am, and the heat in the kiln builds steadily over the next 15 hours or so as logs are fed into it faster and faster by a team of stokers. "However often you have fired the kiln before," he writes, "you can't help being amazed that logs of wood could generate such a dense mass of heat, held in by tons of glowing bricks, with the pots standing out blinding yellow-white in the midst of it. The nearest of them are in arm's reach, yet they are in another world."

In a lifelong quest for ideas about techniques, Mr Caiger-Smith travelled to Egypt, Spain, Morocco, and far into the past in pursuit of authors such as Cicerone, Pliny the Elder, and the 14th-century Italian treatise on the potter's art 400 years ago. Only in the matter of his own teaching does he not come clean. He will say that over the years he learnt from his ever-changing team of half-a-dozen assistants; they, that he was their inspiration.

He is at his best when considering the creative process. He describes potters not as creators but as "makers", who know that "their ideas are not absolutely their own, but are brought about by some interchange between their minds and a source beyond their control". To him, every act of making is "a reverberation of the great wind" which has moved through the universe since the beginning of time.

How agreeable, how rewarding, to spend time in the company of someone so practical, so good with his hands, and yet so articulate about the mysterious forces that have made him a master of his craft.

'Pottery, People and Time', £28 from Richard Dennis Publications, Shepton Beauchamp, Somerset TA19 0LE. The show is at the Richard Dennis Gallery, 144 Kensington Church Street, London W8 4BN (0171-727 2061), until 14 October.



The world's holiest city is also its most divided. As Israel celebrates the 3,000th anniversary of King David's capture of Jerusalem, Abbas's photographs capture the soul of "a golden basin full of scorpions"

Plus: why anorexia is spreading among the under-10s

And a tyrant on trial: Hastings Banda interviewed

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

gardening



Janis Leggott has grown most of the trees in her garden from pips. Now she finds it hard to throw any of them out. "I do like a crowded garden but I want it a bit more organised"

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

Too much of a good thing

WORKSHOP Janis Leggott has a small backyard garden that is out of control. Anna Pavord offers advice

"We have a very small back yard which needs rationalising. We kept adding plants without much thought and now everything seems overgrown and in the wrong place."

At the moment we have the following trees, mostly growing in pots and mostly grown from seeds or cuttings: 2 pomegranates (1ft and 2ft), 4 oaks (about 2ft), 3 Leyland cypresses (1ft to 3ft), 2 lemon or orange (5ft), 2 holly (6ft), blue fir (1ft), Christmas tree (1ft), wild cherry (3ft), apple (2ft), laburnum (2ft), flame tree (2ft), jacaranda (2ft), date palm (1ft), loquat (6ft), 2 small leaved box (2ft), 2 large leaved box (2ft).

The back of the yard faces north and the whole yard is overlooked by another house sideways on. In the winter there is no sun at all. We've made three beds and in the back bed are two roses, 'Albertine' and 'Mme Alfred Carrière', which I can't seem to get under control.

Earlier this year we put up some trellis on a west wall where we have another rose, 'Masquerade' and a Clematis montana 'Grandiflora' which is running amok. We also have a pieris, a passion flower, honeysuckle, a large peony, two spiraea, a golden rod, some hebes, lavender, and so on.

The yard measures about 18ft x 20ft. It seems a lot of plants for something that size, but I do like a crowded garden. I just want it a bit more organised."

When, with a proud sense of parenthood, you have watched a plant right the way through the nappy stage to its sixth or seventh birthday, it is very difficult to bin it. This is the crux of Janis Leggott's problem. She can scarcely pass an apple core in the street without scooping up the pips to sow at home. As she explains in her letter, the loquat, apple, date, citrus which stay out all winter, pomegranates and cherry were all grown from pips. The pomegranate came home with her from a holiday in Majorca. The citrus trees, beautiful healthy specimens with not a trace of sooty mould, came from her mother, who is also an inveterate pip sower. The disease is catching.

Added to this problem of temperance is another more tangible one: the dematis. It is not so much growing as galloping. It has mounded itself up on the west trellis in such a way that it now overhangs the border underneath, and practically obliterates the planting there. It has bolted around to the back wall too, where it has happily tangled with the two roses that Ms Leggott mentioned, making them impossible to prune and causing, there too, a vast overhang of growth. Two big clumps of nerines underneath are swamped and sulking.

Taking things out of a garden is as important as putting things in. Ms Leggott had correctly identified her problem: she's drowning in growth. That's better than the other way around. "Start with the dematis," I advised, feeling that

she would find it easier to be brutal with a plant that she had bought, rather than raised herself from a cutting. By choosing a type of dematis that is a rampant grower, Ms Leggott has added to her difficulties. The dematis needs to be shown that it can go so far and no further.

The stopping point should be just where the border starts on the east-facing wall. Any clematis growth that strays over this unwritten frontier ought to be chopped off. There is plenty of room for it to grow the other way, where concrete comes right up to the boundary and tendrils can hang down from the trellis without causing havoc underneath.

This will free up the back boundary for some necessary attention. It's impossible to get in to work on the roses at the moment because of the web of new dematis growth. Standing there like an ostrich with my head buried in the green, I could see that there was quite a lot of dead rose wood that needed cutting out. The new growths of the rose were either waving high up in the air above the boundary wall, or were falling forward into the yard, getting in the way of everything else. If the roses are to stay, they have to be brought to heel and stuck flat against the wall. They at least, though, will only need pruning and tying in once a year.

'Albertine' is a rambler. This means that you should treat it like a raspberry, cutting out old growths at ground level each year and tying in the new growth

in its place. This new growth should be springing from ground level too. But because ground level had become a dark and murky place, this wasn't happening with Ms Leggott's 'Albertine'. The new shoots were breaking at the top of the wall – the only place where they felt they could find light and air. There were just two old stems at the base. One of them needs to be cut out. I would leave this until January and then cut down the second old stem after the rose had flowered, which it does in early summer.

The growths were badly mildewed, characteristic of 'Albertine' and not made any better by the fact that it is growing here against the wall. Mildew is less of a problem where wind can blow through a rose, as it might do on an arch or other open structure. But Ms Leggott thought the flowers worth the mildew and did not intend to tie herself to a spraying routine. I agree. To control mildew, always worse in dry summers than damp ones, you need to spray at two-weekly intervals from May until October. That is a boring chore. But I would think hard about introducing so disease-prone a rose as 'Albertine' into a small garden where every plant is necessarily seen in close-up.

But what about the forest that Ms Leggott had itemised in her letter: the oaks, the jacaranda, the fir, the apple, the hollies, the Leyland cypresses, all grown from nothing, all watched over anxiously for years and years?

Outsiders are often curiously blind to the merits of one's own children. But the four oaks, bravely growing in five-inch pots, need to be somewhere where they can spread their wings. So do the five conifers and the cherry and the apple. Take them to a charity plant sale, I suggested. That way they may find a more suitable home and help some good cause at the same time. The plants would not have been raised in vain.

That still left a fine pieris, the two citrus, a pomegranate, a yew (not mentioned in the letter) and four box trees clustered together on the concrete (the base of an old air raid shelter) in the middle of the yard. Two of the box trees and the yew could be clipped into good topiary pieces and kept in pots at a manageable four feet tall. But three pieces of topiary would be enough. The other two box bushes might also go off to a plant sale.

With these gone and an axe taken to the tall gangling broom that was the original proud occupant of Ms Leggott's first tentative little bed, made about ten years ago, you would be better able to see the stars of the garden – the magnificent citrus trees, the jacaranda grown from seed brought back by a friend from Zimbabwe, the fine pieris – untrammelled by excess baggage. But there are many people who would not mind having Ms Leggott's problem, which is not that she cannot grow things, but that she grows them too well.

CUTTINGS



The Electoral Reform Society recently released the result of the Royal Horticultural Society's members' ballot on the future of the Society's famous Lindley Library. The ballot attracted four times as many voters as had ever before voiced an opinion on an RHS resolution. The idea of moving the entire library to Wisley, the scheme originally mooted by the Society's president, Sir Simon Hornby, came last in the ballot, attracting 2009 votes, 18 per cent of the total. Members have been surprised therefore to find that in the stop press report on the ballot in the October issue of the members' journal *The Garden*, the Wisley option had apparently acquired an extra thousand phantom votes. The figure that appears there is 3909. "An unfortunate printers' error" said an RHS spokesman. Of the 16,000 votes cast, 52 per cent were in favour of libraries in London and Wisley, with all the historic, rare books and pictures remaining in London and a more practical scientific collection being built up at Wisley. Thirty per cent voted in favour of the entire collection remaining in London.

More news on the loquat. Eric Thorpe of Birchington in Kent writes to say that 15 years ago he bought some yellow, plum-like fruit in Andorra. "The chef at our hotel said they were *nefle*, but since this translates as medlar, he was clearly mistaken. The chestnut-like seed has produced a 12-13ft tree which last year had a bunch of inconspicuous blossom. About a month ago, I had to prune a large branch which revealed a cluster of three yellow fruit, then ripe. Our unusually mild spring might have led to fertilisation of the blossom. We live in a fairly frost-free coastal area, but are subject to cold north-east winds."

This week, John Coke of Green Farm Plants, Bentley, Farnham, Surrey, has been holding an end of season sale of choice and rare herbaceous plants, small shrubs and half hardy salvias. Today is the last day (10am to 6pm) and plants are at a 30 per cent discount. The nursery is not easy to find: if lost, call 01420 23202.

Sandra Mogg of Miserden Writes to say that the iron gate I liked so much in the garden at Miserden Park, Gloucestershire (Independent, 5 August) was made by a local blacksmith, Michael Roberts of Anvil Barn, Miserden. Any one who would like to commission something similar, call 01285 821244.

WEEKEND WORK

When leaves start to fall, stretch netting over garden ponds to catch them – an easier proposition than trying to fish out decomposing masses of vegetation in spring.

Lift dahlia tubers when

the first frosts hit the plants. There has already been stiff frost in the Inverness area of Scotland. Cut off the blackened stems and leave the tubers to dry in the open air for a day before cleaning off loose soil and storing. Dust-

ing with flowers of sulphur stops tubers going mouldy. The simplest way is to put tubers and sulphur in a polythene bag and shake gently. In an ideal world, daffodils for naturalising in grass would have been

planted in September. The recent rains have at last made the ground slightly more malleable. Deep yellow 'Golden Harvest', creamy white 'Mount Hood' and the pinkish 'Mrs R.O. Backhouse' are all good stayers.

Blue puschkinia will also naturalise successfully. Puschkinia are like small bluebells, about six inches high, and flourish in sun or half shade. They bloom between March and May. They would be lost in long grass, so try edges of lawns, rockeries or the margins of mixed borders.

Weeds are growing fast in earth that is still warm. Bury them by mulching thickly with compost, or cut them off with a sharp hoe. Watch out for bindweed amongst permanent plantings of shrubs or between soft fruit such as raspberries and blackcurrants. Glyphosate kills it, but you may need to persevere with more than one application.

Clean out greenhouses, scrubbing them inside and out with a disinfectant that will shift pests that thought they had winter board and lodging there. Cleaning the glass helps plants inside to get as much light as possible through winter. Scrape moss gently away from greenhouse roofs. It often collects alongside glazing bars.

gardening

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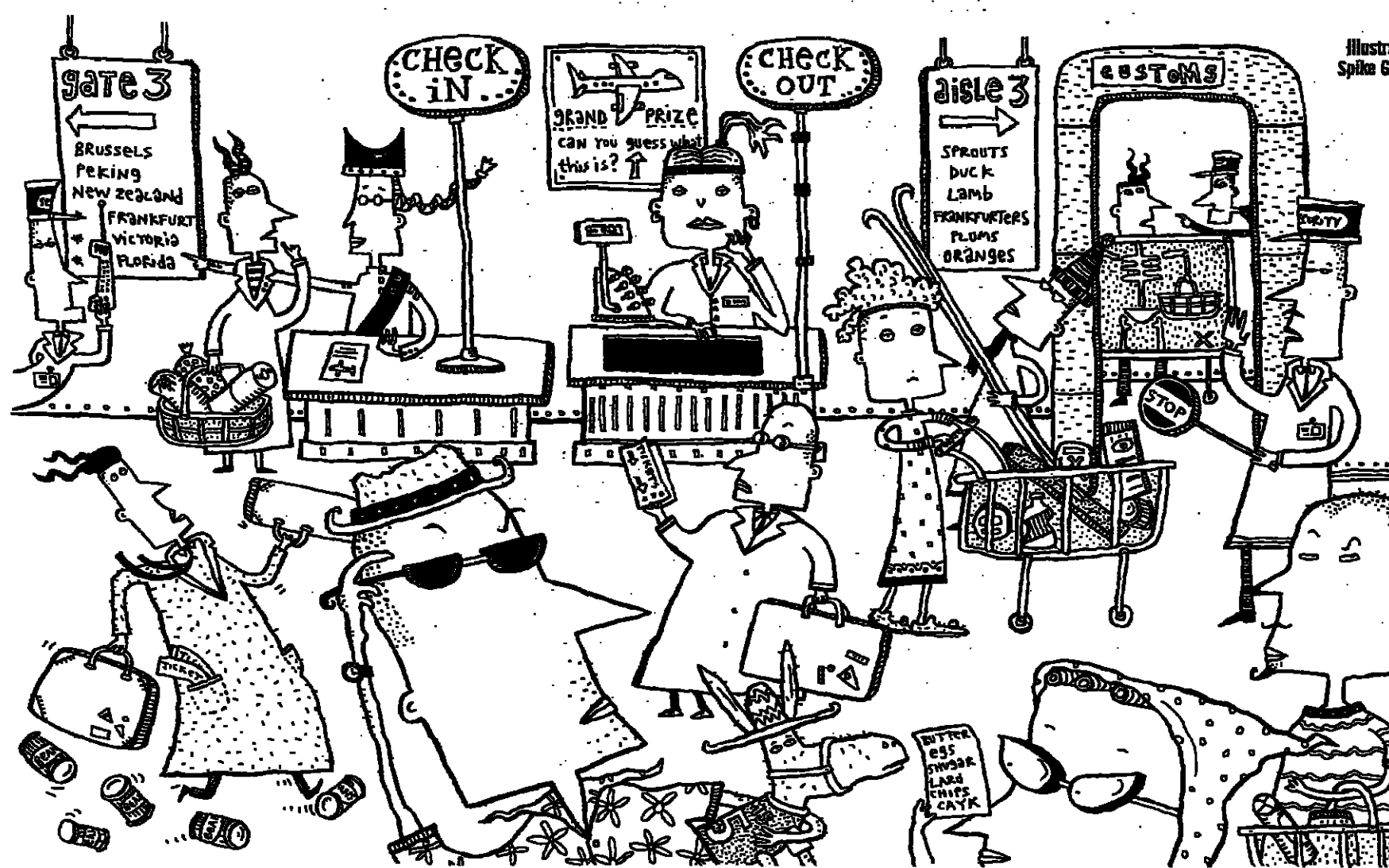
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shopping



Check out? I've only just checked in

Heathrow has ways of making you shop. By Simon Calder

You, like me, probably go to airports to catch a plane. But Sir John Egan, Chief Executive of BAA, would like us to go to Heathrow for our shopping. His company makes more out of retail concessions than it does out of providing for noisy aeroplanes. This week he unveiled the latest shopping-mall-with-a-runway-attached, the new International Departures Lounge at Heathrow's Terminal One.

And impressive it is, too. Going shopping "airside" is not your normal Saturday shopping experience, since you need an air ticket, a passport and a once-over by security to reach it. But when you get through, the scene is comfortably reassuring – big, bright, busy, and indistinguishable from a hundred other shopping malls. With barely a plane to be seen, the main clue that this is an airport is the low price of cigarettes. Airside has long been an over-indulgent paradise. Since the first duty-free shop opened in Shannon in the west of Ireland to cater for transatlantic travellers, the smoking, drinking, perfume-splashing passenger has been able to fill those long operational delays with cut-price shopping. From Biggin Hill to Buenos Aires and Stansted to Sydney, the shopping flyer (or

should that be the flying shopper?) is bombarded with opportunities.

Shannon's duty-free is still there, selling Bailey's Irish Cream by the crate to bleary-eyed Russians; Aeroflot's planes are among the few that still need to refuel for the transatlantic hop. But at Britain's airports, targeting the bargain-hunting shopper has become an exercise in retailing science. The marketing begins on the tube or train to the airport, with reminders about how much you can save compared with the High Street price. And in case you miss all the chances to buy before you fly, the airline is sure to wheel the trolley down the aircraft aisle with all those untaxed goodies. Airtours, Britain's second-biggest tour operator, is even offering pre-purchase of duty-free: book your bottle of scotch when you reserve your fortnight in the sun.

The eagerness of airports and airlines is all to do with the huge profits to be made. Stripped of duty, the base price of a carton of 200 cigarettes is around £3. Sell them for £13, and the punter still makes an unhealthy saving on the normal price, while you make a killing – and none of those troublesome health warnings, either.

But Brussels is looming on the horizon. EU legislation should see the ending of

duty-free concessions within Europe by the end of the century, and with it the whirl of windfall profits. So Sir John and his retailing organisation – sorry, airport operating company – aims to diversify the shopping mix, away from the traditional booze'n'bags beano towards more mainstream retailers. At Terminal One, you can buy boots from Clarks and Ciolets from Boots. Selfridges competes with Liberty and The Scotch House (selling clothing, not whisky, though if you want the latter then Whiskies of the World is the newly opened place for you, with 240 varieties). There's also a new "Beauty Centre", for pre-flight pedicures. It all adds to the choice for the traveller with time and money to spare. For those of us late for the Frankfurt flight, the retail arena may seem another hurdle to leap. But Sir John says the new shops are a boon rather than an impediment for the business traveller. "We've given the businessman his Saturday morning back. He can buy his shirts and his shoes and his ties here, and not have to waste his time on Saturday morning going to the High Street."

The High Street could also lose out if local people start regarding airports as out-of-town shopping malls, and switch their custom to the ever-increasing number of

shops "landside" (i.e. before passport control). But attracting people to these stores is a trickier proposition, and not just because duty and VAT are levied. Why battle with suitcase-brandishing travellers when all you want is a quiet Monday morning shop? Why pay the high rates charged for airport car parks? And why risk the onset of envy as you realise that all these people are heading for Kampala or Kiev while your next trip is back to the kitchen?

My experiment to see if I could shop sensibly at Heathrow was not a huge success. To try to buy your essentials at the airport is a bit like going shopping in Moscow used to be: a retail lottery that you always seem to lose. The only part of the airport with anything like the range of "normal" shops is the first-floor corridor between Terminals One and Two. Besides a dry-cleaners and a closed-down branch of Magsuits, the thinly stocked Circle C minimarket is the closest you get to real retailing life. This week's bargain is Yeoman lager at 44p a can – undercutting the cheapest beer in duty-free, but not quite an enticement to abandon Hounslow High Street. Yet perhaps the peculiar attraction that airports hold will help Sir John's mission: you can't go plane-spotting at the average Arndale Centre.

WILL HEATHROW TEMPT THE SHOPPERS OF HOUNSLOW AWAY FROM THE HIGH STREET?



HARRIET HOVANESSIAN

"I wouldn't have thought the airport's got much to offer in terms of shopping facilities. It's hard to get anyone to come here [the high street's being dug up], but when it's all sorted out it'll be good."



PHYLLIS LAWRENCE

"No, I wouldn't go there, no. We've always shopped here, it's just convenient. At the moment it's hard to get anyone to come here [the high street's being dug up], but when it's all sorted out it'll be good."



KIRTI KUMAR

"The shopping facilities here are excellent, but at the airport not everything is available. And here in Hounslow the market means there's so much competition that prices are low."



MARJOLEIN BOS

"I'm an air hostess so I'm at the airport many times, and I don't think the shopping is as good as it is here. I sometimes go shopping at Heathrow, but the choice is better here. The best place in the world for shopping is the States, it's much cheaper than England."

Six of the best hipsters

1 Joseph, £89
The stretch suede-effect camel trousers are beautiful to the touch, and a good shape. Sure to be a winner with those currently obsessed with all things camel. From Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, London SW1, and Joseph branches at 77 Fulham Road, SW3, and 26 Sloane Street, London SW1

2 Whistles, £130
Fake fur prints are another big theme for our autumn/winter wardrobes. These dalmatian-print trousers look as if they once belonged to Jimi Hendrix and have a truly foxy edge. They are lined for extra comfort and have a side zip. From Whistles, 27 Sloane Square, London SW1 and branches. Enquiries on 0171-730 9819

3 Gucci, £215
The zip of these stretch hipsters is barely longer than an inch so there is a danger of revealing just a little too much. The acetate/viscose fabric is nicely delicate, but likely to snag. From Gucci, 33 Old Bond Street, London W1 and 18 Sloane Street, SW1. Enquiries on 0171-629 2716.

4 Agnès B, £82
When Uma Thurman did the twist with John Travolta in *Pulp Fiction* her strides were by Agnès B. Reason enough to buy these: with front zip, two pockets and side vents at the ankles. Not as low slung as the others featured. From Agnès B, 235 Westbourne Grove, London W11 and 35-36 Floral Street, WC2

5 Red or Dead, £51
Not your everyday trousers, unless you are a motorbike courier, or someone seriously into clubbing. They zip up at the back and the leg is tapered with quilting down the sides. Also available in white. From branches of Red or Dead nationwide. Enquiries 0171-937 3137

6 Kookai, £89.99
These have a boyish appeal, but are possibly too stretchy: every lump and bump is on display. They're made from a polyester/wool/Lycra mix. A matching jacket is also available for those who want that ultra hip mannish suit. From branches of Kookai nationwide. Enquiries on 0171-937 4411

Photographer: Andrew Lamb. Stylist: Charlie Harrington



AUCTIONS

Why is the Queen Mother wearing a conical beaded cap? Find out at Christie's South Ken's sale of tribal art

Well-heeled Europeans will be ploughing through Old Masters in Baden-Baden, Germany, this week, in what Sotheby's claims as the biggest fine art auction in living memory. The Margrave of Baden, cousin of Prince Charles, is selling 25,000 heirlooms – paintings, furniture, ceramics, silver, textiles – crammed until now into all 105 rooms and corridors of the Neues Schloss, one of the family's three castles. The 15-day sale, until Saturday 21 October, is expected to raise £13m.

The House of Baden is selling its family silver because of a decline in the engineering and forestry industries, that made it rich. Meanwhile, in London, impoverished Brits have a chance to pick up cheap tribal art from former colonies that made Britain rich.

The current Africa '95 season of events and exhibitions has sparked a new interest in tribal art. If prices are to rise, then Christie's South Kensington's bi-annual minor sale, Tuesday (10.30am), should see some competitive edge. But it may be some time before the new wave

of interest raises prices across the board. A Nigerian Benin cast, brass Queen Mother head is in the sale without estimate – which means that less than £100 is expected. (It is their Queen Mother, by the way, not ours: she wears a conical beaded cap). Such castings were made by the "lost wax" method, in which the narrow cavity vacated by molten wax is filled with molten brass. An example dating from 1500 or earlier is expected to fetch £60,000-£80,000 at Christie's bi-annual major tribal art sale in December. Why the difference in value? South Ken's Queen Mum head is the product of a Benin craft revival that began supplying the western art market in the Fifties. It is not regarded as pukka tribal art but "airport art", a reference to airport souvenir shops.

American collectors, who provide more than 60 per cent of the London auction income from tribal art, will not touch such things. Which is good news for British collectors. There are some wonderful things for sale. A big, confident Nigerian Gomai pottery vessel with

naked female on the shoulder, probably made in the Forties or Fifties and expected to fetch £400-£600. Two Peruvian pots of the Chimú people, who flourished AD1200-1400, are without estimate, as is a North American Indian bead "glengarry" or smoking hat, probably made for Victorian travellers.

Christie's third annual sale of German and Austrian art is on Wednesday (2pm) and seems to have become one of the season's fixtures. Nowadays, museums are eager to fill gaps in their German Expressionist collections while they are still cheaper than their French equivalents. Last year's sale produced artists' records for Schmidt-Rothluff, Liebermann, Jawlensky, Corinth and Kirchner.

Wizard wheeze by Sotheby's: a "Food and drink" sale, actually the sale of Swiss chef Anton Mosimann's collection of 19th-century cooking ranges, posters, cook books and his own menu cards: Thursday (10.30am).

John Windsor

collecting • antiques, galleries

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ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS, Piccadilly, W1, 10-11 Daily. Recorded info 0171-499 49877, C/O 0171-494 5676. Antiques The Art of a Connoisseur, From Masset to Gainsborough - First Dept.
MARLBOROUGH FINE ARTS, 8 Abchurch Lane, W1, Victor Pasmore, New Works, Paintings, Etchings and Lithographs, Unit 21 Octagon, Macc-FH 10-5.30, Sat 10-12.30, 0171-499 5161.
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A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a person's face, heavily shadowed and grainy. The person's features are partially obscured by deep shadows, particularly around the eyes and nose. A hand is visible in the foreground, reaching towards the face. The overall image has a stark, almost abstract quality due to the extreme contrast and grain.

A black and white photograph of a plate of food, likely a burger or sandwich, with a tomato slice on top. The image is grainy and high-contrast, with the food appearing dark against a lighter background. The plate is oval-shaped and the food is centered on it.

Keaton's young people didn't have a very good life started when the age of 11, was a juvenile act with his parents. By the 1920s he was an accomplished actor and director. His elegant performances, sophisticated sets and flamboyant travelling shots combined to produce a series of masterpieces. A brilliant mime, acrobat and clown, Keaton created pure physical gags without words, or the computer-enhanced laughs pumped into films like *The Mask*. Less slapstick than *The Keystone Cops*, less mawkish than Chaplin, of all the silent comics only Keaton could have teamed up with Samuel Beckett in the Sixties to make the melancholic *Film*. A seriously funny man.

Keaton season to 31 Oct, NFT, South Bank London SE1 (0171-928 2322)

Things to do, places to

As fairytales go, Walt Disney's *Aladdin* has had its fair share of rubs of the lamp. But there's always room for one more, and currently on display at London's Wembley Arena is the latest reworking of the classic family favourite. Yes, it's Walt Disney's *World on Ice* – *Aladdin*. The cast list reads like an Olympic ice-skating championship, the props list almost seems worthy of the \$8m outlay, and the whole show is the brainchild of Kenneth Feld, "America's Master Showman". Fortunately, being the owner of Barnum and Bailey, Mr Feld knows a thing or two about the entertainment business, and has created a skating extravaganza which is already on tour in six different parts of the world. We're talking big-time entertainment here, with 300 prop pieces, 22 scenic curtains, 46 skaters and 2,788 metres of fabric all rolled into one portion of wholesome family entertainment. You all know the story: *Aladdin*, the street urchin, falls in love with the beautiful princess Jasmine (courtesy of a handy genie), falls foul of the evil sorcerer, Jafar, and ends up getting the girl, freeing the genie and putting paid to the sorcerer. All the original songs are there, plus skaters from all over the globe. In fact, the only thing missing will be thin ice.

To 29 Oct, Wembley Arena (0181-900 1234); then 1-12 Nov. National Indoor Arena, Birmingham (0121-200 2222)

film
West End

[illegible]

BLACKBURN (15) Futuristic comedy. *River* Warner Bros. 2.45

● **THE BRIDE WITH A VENGEANCE** (15) Bruce Willis back in New York facing a twisted criminal mastermind. *Warner* 2.45

CHAMPAGNE 3.15, 6.15, 9.25; *Lightnight* (S) *Chase Muzumbugh*, *Levine* Warner 2.25, 3.45, 8.25, 9.25; *Cherry Chase* S1 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S2 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S3 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S4 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S5 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S6 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S7 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S8 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S9 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S10 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S11 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S12 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S13 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S14 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S15 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S16 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S17 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S18 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S19 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S20 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S21 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S22 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S23 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S24 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S25 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S26 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S27 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S28 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S29 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S30 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S31 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S32 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S33 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S34 11.30; *Cherry Chase* S35 11.30; 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each pro-in-communism in the er of Ian Julian makes

Africa, the A pivotal show has survived cultural misap in fine shape, course from the art of a lo ment. Royal A

THEY HANDED 100th anniversary production *Old Vic: Watkinson Road, SE3* (0171-278-7100) • *SW: Watkinson. Mon-Sat 7.30, [4/7] 3, and 18 Nov, 8-12, 22.*

ROMAN RE
Tom Stoppard's latest, with Hiamh Cheeseman, *Adelphi, WC2* (0171-416 6800) • *LES HOBOKEN*
Musical of Victor Hugo's masterpiece, *Palace Sutherland, W1* (0171-476 0700) • *0900* • *Vicar Choir. Mon-Sat 7.30, [5/7] 3, 23-30, 4-27, 30.*

THE LETTERS
Joan Littlewood and Tim Pigott-Smith set *Lytic Hammerhead King Street, WS* (011-474 2211) • *Hammerhead. Mon-Sat 7.2.30, and 14 Oct. Mon 23, then 7.50-12.15, Sunday even.*

MISS SAUNDERS
Maxine Batterley returns in Vietnam, *Theatre Royal, Drury Lane Catherine St, WC2* (0171-494 5063) • *Coward Theatre. Mon-Sat 7.45, [4/7] 3, 30, 8.30-12.30.*

THE IMPORTANCE
Agathe Chabrier's whodunnit, *St Jodely's West End* (0171-434 1493) • *1-3, Mon-Sat 8.00, [3/4] 2.45, 7.10, 8.40, 8.50.*

ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE: lines for today's *Chieftain*
Between Michael Gambon in Matthew Wardhaugh's production, *Today 2.00 & 7.15; Lyndoch*
What *Joe Miller* said Richard Wilson and *Alfred Lord* set. Last performance today & 7.30
Cotswolds
The British Women's *Katie Mitchell* direct *Today 2.30 & 7.30*
Oliver & Lyndoch 7.50-9.22.50, 9.25
011-474-501. *Day starts from 10.00. South Bank, SE2* (0171-422 2252) • *0171-474-501*
ROYAL SWINBURNE COMPANY: comes for *The Mockers*
Barry Paine *Clen* *Today 2.00 & 7.15*

PART

IN SALE

of a Continent The Africa '95 season the accusations of roptation to emerge an essential crash 000BC onwards in g-neglected conti- nery, London

The Pic
The Park Boito Strass's start, Germany
2,000 & 715
Buckingham Palace, 64-214, The Pic 0-
Barbican Centre, B2C2 (0171-438 881)
Barbican/Moorgate.

The Young Pic
New Best John Barban's version of Three
ladies, 2,000 & 715
Young Vic, D3-218, The Cat, SE1 (01
6363) /BYR: Waterloo.

OLIVIER
Jim Dale stars in Fagin.
London Palladium, Argyl St (0171-494
000) /O: Old Cn, Mon-Sat, 7.30, [4] 7.2.30, 3.0.

ONLY THE LOVELY
Exclusive biography of Roy Chibson.
Palatine Dominion Street, W7 (0171-36
000) /O: O: Old Cn, Mon-Sat, 7.30, [4] 7.2.30, 3.0 & 5.31, [1] 4.00, A5-625.

THE NEW MUSIC THEATRE
Andrew Lloyd Webber's Celtic music
His Majesty's Haymarket (0171-494 540)
/O: Pic Cn, Mon-Sat, 7.35, [4] 7.3.10, 3.0, 3.0.

THE NEW MUSICAL
Ron Harwood's Englishmen dance.
Duke of York's Theatre Lane, WC2
E36-322) /O: Late Sat, Mon-Sat, 7.30 (11
1745) /P: 0171-3100, ends 18 Nov, A5-625.

SUNDAY EXPRESS
Lloyd Webber's high-tech roller-musical
Anglo Victoria Wilton Road, SW1 (0171-
494 540) /O: Victoria, Mon-Sat, 7.45, [5]
3.0, 2.12-5.0-6.30.

THE SHEDDOING OF CHANCE
Robert Alton's tender Irish drama.
Seymour Square Glouce Square, SW1 (0171-
7345) /O: Glouce Sq, Mon-Sat, 7.30, end Oct,
Oct, E-15, all, tickets available.

SUPPER LONDONERS
Petula Clark stars in Lloyd Webber's
Avalanche! Strand (0171-364 0025) /O: Ch
Mon-Sat, 7.45, [5] 7.31, 2.30, 3.15-3.30.

TWO MEN
A conductor is treated by Nazim.
Criterion Piccadilly Circle (839 4488) /O:
Cn, Mon-Sat, 7.30, [4] 7.2.30, 3.0, 3.0.

THEATRE
DAVID BENEDICT

Three Sisters Director Max
Afford-Clark powerfully evokes
the grand themes of Chekhov's
heartbreak and hope by focus-
ing on the details. A clutch of fine per-
formances in a meticulous and vir-
tually unsentimental production.

Violist Old Vic

TOP BOSS
Unfaded high velocity pop entertainment
Saulnier's *White Rosemary Avenue*, EC1A
294 (9.00) @ August. Last performance
7.00 & 9.00, 25-27.00, comics on all nights

THREE TALL WOMEN
Edward Albee's unadorned drama.
Wynham's *Charing Cross Road*, WC2
309 (7.00-9.00) 7.11.11 @ 7.11.11 & 7.11.11 Sat.
A.M. (7.77) 3.00, 9.00-9.25.

THE SUMMER IN HILL
Edward Albee's chilling ghost story.
Farlane Russell Street, WC2 (9.00) 7.05
@ Covent Garden's old room. More Sat.
3.00, (7.77) 4.00, 9.00-9.25.

Beyond the West End
London

HARDY STEINER
Sally Smith (Dorothy) in John Gielgud's
adaptation of *Hamlet*, Sat. 3pm. Main Sat. 8pm.
NW3 (071-72 9201) @ Savoy Cinema.
NW3 (071-72 9201) @ Savoy Cinema.

ORIGINAL THEATRE
The Real Menzies Sam Walters' production
of *King Lear*, Sat. 8pm. Last performance
today (Sat.) & 7.45pm. (7.77-7.50), comic
available. *Chancery St. Richmond* (071-72
3633) @ R.R.C. Richmond.


Around the country
Traverse

THEATRE
WINDY HILLS
Three Sisters Sat. Celtic's Choice. Last
performance today 2.30pm & 8pm.
Leaving 14.42-14.50, comics available.
King Street (071-287 7877)

Chichester

CHICHESTER FESTIVAL THEATRE
The Wolf Laurens Beazell and Anna Ardley
Tony Hens's production of a fable on
wilderness. Mon-Tue 7.30pm, Fri & Sat
7.30pm & 2.30pm, ends 14.00 (9.50-
10.00) comics available.

Oaklands Park (013-237 5113)



BYAN GILDER

Land and Freedom Ken Loach provides a vivid insight into the infighting which dogged the Communists as they attempted to win the Spanish Civil War. The power of Ian Hart, as an idealistic Liverpoolian enlisting to fight the Fascists, makes the film blindingly pertinent.

MAIN CALL

Africa, the Art of a Continent The pivotal show of the Africa '95 season has survived all the accusations of cultural misappropriation to emerge in fine shape. An essential crash course from 27,000BC onwards in the art of a long-neglected continent. *Royal Academy, London*

DAVID BENEDETTO

Three Sisters Director Max Stafford-Clark powerfully evokes the grand themes of Chekhov's tale of heartbreak and hope by focusing on the details. A clutch of fine performances in a meticulous and wonderfully unsentimental production. *Bristol Old Vic*

11. 12. 13.

West End
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[illegible]

@ Holbrook, Mon-Fri 7:30, [47] 3:30, [21]
LES MOUSMES
Musical of Victor Garber's autobiographies.
 @ New York, Mon-Fri 8:00, [57] 7:30, [21]
 (900) @ Pines Glen, Mon-Sat 3:30, [57] 7:30
 5:25-6:27, 50

THE LETTERS
John Lemley and Tim Pigott-Smith.
Lark Homestead 448 King Street, WS (01)
 741 (211) @ Hamamstead, Mon-Sat 7:30
 5:25-6:27, 50 Mon-Fri, then 5:25-6:27, 50
 sundays even, 50

MISS BESSIE
Maclean Burdette recs in Crown.
How Many Do You Love 14 Catherine St.
 WC2 (01) 494-4951 @ Victoria, Mon-Fri
 Mon-Fri 2:45, [47] 7:30, 8:30-9:30, 20

THE MUSICIAN
Angela Chatterton's Wednesday.
 @ New York, Sun (01) 4:30-10:30, [57] 10:30-11:30
 @ St. Mon-Sat 8:00, [57] 2:45, [71] 5:45, [21]
ROYAL NATIONAL THEATRE: issues for this
 review

@ London: Michael Gough in *Matthew*
 Warshaw's production, Tuesday 2:00 to 7:15
 Lyndhurst

@ New York: Ian Richard Wilson and
 Alan Smit. Last performances on Tuesday
 at 7:30
 Cotuitone

@ London: The Wanders Kate Mitchell direc
 Tuesday 2:30 to 7:30
 @ New York: 7:30-8:30, [57] 8:30-9:30, [21]
 @ New York: 7:30-8:30, [57] 8:30-9:30, [21]
 @ New York: 7:30-8:30, [57] 8:30-9:30, [21]
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY: comes for
 The Merchant

@ New York: Open from 12:00-11:00
 @ New York: Open from 12:00-11:00

YOUNG Vio B. 1932. The Can. Spt. 11 (01-6363) *WED: Waterloo*.

OLDFIN
Jan Dale mrs on Page 1.
Pulaski Co. Arg. S. (017)-494
* *Ord. Can. Men. 7-30, [47] 2-30, [48] 2-30.*

ONLY THE LOVELY
The Geography of Ray Ochs.
Piccadilly Press, N.Y. (017)-36-
1000. *Can. Men. 7-30, [47] 2-30, [48] 2-30, [49] 2-30, [50] 2-30, [51] 2-30, [52] 2-30, [53] 2-30, [54] 2-30, [55] 2-30, [56] 2-30, [57] 2-30, [58] 2-30, [59] 2-30, [60] 2-30, [61] 2-30, [62] 2-30, [63] 2-30, [64] 2-30, [65] 2-30, [66] 2-30, [67] 2-30, [68] 2-30, [69] 2-30, [70] 2-30, [71] 2-30, [72] 2-30, [73] 2-30, [74] 2-30, [75] 2-30, [76] 2-30, [77] 2-30, [78] 2-30, [79] 2-30, [80] 2-30, [81] 2-30, [82] 2-30, [83] 2-30, [84] 2-30, [85] 2-30, [86] 2-30, [87] 2-30, [88] 2-30, [89] 2-30, [90] 2-30, [91] 2-30, [92] 2-30, [93] 2-30, [94] 2-30, [95] 2-30, [96] 2-30, [97] 2-30, [98] 2-30, [99] 2-30, [100] 2-30, [101] 2-30, [102] 2-30, [103] 2-30, [104] 2-30, [105] 2-30, [106] 2-30, [107] 2-30, [108] 2-30, [109] 2-30, [110] 2-30, [111] 2-30, [112] 2-30, [113] 2-30, [114] 2-30, [115] 2-30, [116] 2-30, [117] 2-30, [118] 2-30, [119] 2-30, [120] 2-30, [121] 2-30, [122] 2-30, [123] 2-30, [124] 2-30, [125] 2-30, [126] 2-30, [127] 2-30, [128] 2-30, [129] 2-30, [130] 2-30, [131] 2-30, [132] 2-30, [133] 2-30, [134] 2-30, [135] 2-30, [136] 2-30, [137] 2-30, [138] 2-30, [139] 2-30, [140] 2-30, [141] 2-30, [142] 2-30, [143] 2-30, [144] 2-30, [145] 2-30, [146] 2-30, [147] 2-30, [148] 2-30, [149] 2-30, [150] 2-30, [151] 2-30, [152] 2-30, [153] 2-30, [154] 2-30, [155] 2-30, [156] 2-30, [157] 2-30, [158] 2-30, [159] 2-30, [160] 2-30, [161] 2-30, [162] 2-30, [163] 2-30, [164] 2-30, [165] 2-30, [166] 2-30, [167] 2-30, [168] 2-30, [169] 2-30, [170] 2-30, [171] 2-30, [172] 2-30, [173] 2-30, [174] 2-30, [175] 2-30, [176] 2-30, [177] 2-30, [178] 2-30, [179] 2-30, [180] 2-30, [181] 2-30, [182] 2-30, [183] 2-30, [184] 2-30, [185] 2-30, [186] 2-30, [187] 2-30, [188] 2-30, [189] 2-30, [190] 2-30, [191] 2-30, [192] 2-30, [193] 2-30, [194] 2-30, [195] 2-30, [196] 2-30, [197] 2-30, [198] 2-30, [199] 2-30, [200] 2-30, [201] 2-30, [202] 2-30, [203] 2-30, [204] 2-30, [205] 2-30, [206] 2-30, [207] 2-30, [208] 2-30, [209] 2-30, [210] 2-30, [211] 2-30, [212] 2-30, [213] 2-30, [214] 2-30, [215] 2-30, [216] 2-30, [217] 2-30, [218] 2-30, [219] 2-30, [220] 2-30, [221] 2-30, [222] 2-30, [223] 2-30, [224] 2-30, [225] 2-30, [226] 2-30, [227] 2-30, [228] 2-30, [229] 2-30, [230] 2-30, [231] 2-30, [232] 2-30, [233] 2-30, [234] 2-30, [235] 2-30, [236] 2-30, [237] 2-30, [238] 2-30, [239] 2-30, [240] 2-30, [241] 2-30, [242] 2-30, [243] 2-30, [244] 2-30, [245] 2-30, [246] 2-30, [247] 2-30, [248] 2-30, [249] 2-30, [250] 2-30, [251] 2-30, [252] 2-30, [253] 2-30, [254] 2-30, [255] 2-30, [256] 2-30, [257] 2-30, [258] 2-30, [259] 2-30, [260] 2-30, [261] 2-30, [262] 2-30, [263] 2-30, [264] 2-30, [265] 2-30, [266] 2-30, [267] 2-30, [268] 2-30, [269] 2-30, [270] 2-30, [271] 2-30, [272] 2-30, [273] 2-30, [274] 2-30, [275] 2-30, [276] 2-30, [277] 2-30, [278] 2-30, [279] 2-30, [280] 2-30, [281] 2-30, [282] 2-30, [283] 2-30, [284] 2-30, [285] 2-30, [286] 2-30, [287] 2-30, [288] 2-30, [289] 2-30, [290] 2-30, [291] 2-30, [292] 2-30, [293] 2-30, [294] 2-30, [295] 2-30, [296] 2-30, [297] 2-30, [298] 2-30, [299] 2-30, [300] 2-30, [301] 2-30, [302] 2-30, [303] 2-30, [304] 2-30, [305] 2-30, [306] 2-30, [307] 2-30, [308] 2-30, [309] 2-30, [310] 2-30, [311] 2-30, [312] 2-30, [313] 2-30, [314] 2-30, [315] 2-30, [316] 2-30, [317] 2-30, [318] 2-30, [319] 2-30, [320] 2-30, [321] 2-30, [322] 2-30, [323] 2-30, [324] 2-30, [325] 2-30, [326] 2-30, [327] 2-30, [328] 2-30, [329] 2-30, [330] 2-30, [331] 2-30, [332] 2-30, [333] 2-30, [334] 2-30, [335] 2-30, [336] 2-30, [337] 2-30, [338] 2-30, [339] 2-30, [340] 2-30, [341] 2-30, [342] 2-30, [343] 2-30, [344] 2-30, [345] 2-30, [346] 2-30, [347] 2-30, [348] 2-30, [349] 2-30, [350] 2-30, [351] 2-30, [352] 2-30, [353] 2-30, [354] 2-30, [355] 2-30, [356] 2-30, [357] 2-30, [358] 2-30, [359] 2-30, [360] 2-30, [361] 2-30, [362] 2-30, [363] 2-30, [364] 2-30, [365] 2-30, [366] 2-30, [367] 2-30, [368] 2-30, [369] 2-30, [370] 2-30, [371] 2-30, [372] 2-30, [373] 2-30, [374] 2-30, [375] 2-30, [376] 2-30, [377] 2-30, [378] 2-30, [379] 2-30, [380] 2-30, [381] 2-30, [382] 2-30, [383] 2-30, [384] 2-30, [385] 2-30, [386] 2-30, [387] 2-30, [388] 2-30, [389] 2-30, [390] 2-30, [391] 2-30, [392] 2-30, [393] 2-30, [394] 2-30, [395] 2-30, [396] 2-30, [397] 2-30, [398] 2-30, [399] 2-30, [400] 2-30, [401] 2-30, [402] 2-30, [403] 2-30, [404] 2-30, [405] 2-30, [406] 2*

THE WOMEN IN BLACK
Barnes & Noble's Chicago ghost story
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صلى الله عليه وسلم

Today and tomorrow will see collectors from all over the world training their binoculars on the birds of the island as part of the global celebration of birds and birdwatching organised by the RSPB. A spokesman explains: "Although it's difficult to get our members together, the authorities have agreed to try and make it the best conservation of birds and therefore the best wildlife spot." It's the most interesting time of year for our feathered friends, with summer visitors having left and some still leaving, and birds from colder climes, such as Iceland, Siberia and Eastern Europe, looking for a mild place to spend the winter or simply a stop-off point en route to the south. Spectacular sights at the first event in 1993 included thousands of swallows and martins gathering to leave for Africa, and thousands of waders, ducks and geese arriving from Greenland and Iceland. Then there is just the chance of spotting a really unusual vagrant blown in across the Atlantic from North America. But spotting rarities is not what this weekend is really about, say the organisers. "It's a chance to talk birds, ask questions and hopefully even join the RSPB."

For information on any of the events ring the RSPB (01767 680551)

Lee Valley Wildlife NPS Nature Reserve Hodgesdon, Maryland (01992) 460034 • **Sunday 10am-5pm** Situated around a complex of lakes which are part of the Lee Valley. Specialities of the site include the kingfisher and the water rail; your chance of seeing the former is good and the latter, a possibility. Also a good place for seeing snipe close up, the green sandpiper and a variety of birds gathering for migration.

Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust Llanelli *Llanelli, Dyfed, Wales (01554 741087) today & Sun 9.30am-5.30pm* This 40-acre site, housing around 100 species of captive birds along with visitors, lies on the Loughor Estuary (part of the Bury inlet).

Hayle Estuary Hayle, Cornwall (01392 432691)
today and tomorrow 10.30am-12.30pm at the
Old Quay House Inn car park The beauty of this
small estuary is that the birds are close at hand.
Telescopes will be set up for the public today
and tomorrow to view waders like curlew, dun-
lin, redshank and greenshank. There are three
kingfishers on site and sometimes a peregrine
falcon appears. At this time of year it is occa-
sionally possible to spot an exciting North Amer-
ican wader blown off course

Little Paxton Pits Nature Reserve St Neots, Cambridgeshire (01487 840615) Sunday 10am-4pm A reserve of gravel pits with surrounding woodland attracting a wide variety of species of birds. There are many wild fowl, in particular ducks. A cormorant roost and heronry provide good views of dramatic groupings. Kingfisher-spotting pays dividends too. Guided walks will be on the hour, every hour as well as manned telescopes.

LISTINGS

Echobelly Maybe you saw their bizarre appearance on **JOTP** recently, singing "Grea Things" in their school uniform. Now's the chance to check out the rest of their wristling pop from the newly released second album **On. Sun. Tumbiside Junction**.

When Meredith Monk is on stage she reinvents music. This is more than the performance of a creative singer - it's a whole personal language of voice and body. Tonight, her only current UK appearance, features solo and duet pieces, some new. Tonight, *QEH, London*

Alexei Sayle By day, he's an *Independent* columnist; by night, he is mounting his first national stand-up tour for five years. Special guest stars are John "Really Free" Otway, and the hopeless, frilly-shirted, Scouse comedian, Bobby "how yer diddlin'?" Chariot. *Sun, Aylesbury*

Asoria Theatre Charing Cross Road WC2 (0171-434 0403) @ Tost C. Rd. Sun 7pm, £8.
Fully Debatante-punk pop quartet. **King's College** Surrey Street WC2 (0171-836 7132) @ **Charing Cross**. Tonight 7.30pm, £2.
William Gaze Acid-fried would-be mystic. **Shepherd's Bush Empire** Shepherd's Bush Green W12 (0181-740 7474) @ **Shepherd's Bush**. Tonight 7pm, £10.

London
Jazz Canteens Gilly's soul-jazz survivors, *Astoria* 2 Charing Cross Road WC2 (0171-434 0403) @ Toti Cross Road, Sun 7pm, £15.
Rumba Baller! Bas Bas Jazz and six trombones with vibroclasts Roger Beaujournis, *Jazz Cafe* Parkway NW1 (0171-344 0044) @ Camden 2, Thurs 10pm, 5th, 6th, 7th.

Words in the Fire (reading of rehearsed scripts, poems and songs. *Melrose Theatre The Friars* (01227-287787). Sun 7.30pm, £11, cones £9.50.

Cheltenham
Cheltenham Festival of Literature with a remarkable line-up of writers from behind the Iron Curtain and Berlin Wall. *Various Venues* (01242-227777). Ends 15 Oct, phone for details.

events
Arundel
World Birdwatch 95 Series of guided walks, *Winfred & Westons Trust Mill Road (D191-416545)*. Today and Sun, 1.30pm, £3.95, child £2, cones £2.95, family £9.90.

Chichester
An Evening With Laura Ince Talking candidly about her extraordinary life and career. *Chichester Festival Theatre* Oaklands Park (01243-781312). Sun 7.45pm, £14.

Westminster Horse Show at the new West Valley Expo Center and fifty stalls selling and buying American Saddle horses, **Methodist Central Hall** Sorely's Gate SW1 (0171-222 8010) • **Westminster/SA** James Park. Today 11am-4pm, £1.
International Festival Of Fine Wine & Food Olympia/Hagnessmith Road W14 (0171-603 3344) • **Earls Court/Olympia**. Today 10.30am-8.30pm, Sun 11am-6pm, £15.
Wair Sorely's Gate See box on **North** **Exhibition** above.

Head-dressers, military especially of 1879
Zulu war, presentation items relating to
Russian President Leonid Brezhnev, Japanese weapons, Armada chest, Victorian polyphos, tomorrow at the Thistle Hotel (2pm). Kent Sales (01322-864919).
Headline: Entire contents of two fishing tackle shops - about 1,000 lots of top-brand rods, reels, nets, hooks, luggage, umbrellas, clothing, accessories, next Saturday (11am) NINE

19 August Street, Hibscoy (12.15-2.15pm)
Warrington: Over 300 lots of Poole pottery,
 a large range of Currier, Stabler, Adams ware,
 including early signed Currier stoneware.
Tuesday (10am): Cottages, The Market, East
 Street (01929-552826).
Stane, County North: 130 lots of old and antique
 farm machinery, agricultural tools, butter-
 making equipment, horse tack, household
 goods, today (2pm) at Newgrange Farm,
 Street, 01929-552826.

Antiques: Collectables and sporting memorabilia, including early postcards, cigarette cards, books, automobile and cycling memorabilia, costume, linen and lace, militaria, Friday (4.30pm) at North Petherton Rugby Club, Chaire Rawle (01823-324983).

fairs

APMA Fine Art and Antiques, Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, south-west London. Tuesday-Sunday (0171-823 3511).
Antique Dealers Fair of Scotland, Hoppers

West Saturday-Sunday (Britannia Fairs 01984-331666).
 Art Baza, 120 stands, Battersea Town Hall, Lavender Hill, south west London, tomorrow (0181-946 6393).
 Kenneth Lakeland Antiques and Collectors, Granby Hall, 300 stands, tomorrow (Four in One 01455-233495).
 London Park Antiques, 550 stands, Tuesday

Antiques and Collectors, RAF Swindley, near
Friday-Sunday (Arthur Swallow Fair 01246-
12649).

Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity
CONTEMPORARY GATHERING: Room HC, 9:30am. Moten, Tr. Very Rev M.C.O. Mayer; 11am. Song Exhortation. Schubert on G, The Rev R.L.H. Symon; 3:15pm. Contemporary Festival Evensong. St Paul's service (Howells) opens Canon Riccial, David Flood.

[illegible]

Divine Liturgy, Choral Music of the Kivan and Znamenny traditions, sung in Church Slavonic.
CATHEDRAL OF ST SAVVY (Serbian Orthodox, Lancaster Road, London W7): 10:00am Divine Liturgy, Traditional Serbian Choral Music, sung in Church Slavonic.
ANGELUS APPOINTED CHURCH OF ST GABRIEL, Ivorra Gardens, London W8: 11am Morning Prayer.
Archbishop Yeghise Girkian.

Cathedral Royal, St James's Palace: 10:00am HC: 11:35am

Remembrance Chapel, South Audley Street, W1. 8.15am
 [H.C.] 11am Sung Eucharist, The Rev Simon Hilditch
 Martin Chapel, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11am
 Marston, Bring us, O Lord God (HARRIS), The Chaplain
 12pm HC
 Royal Hospital Chelsea, SW3: 11am Morning Prayer
 Hail, glorifying light (Wood), The Rev T. Hince
 Royal Naval College Chapel, Greenwich, SE10: 11am
 Sung Eucharist, Sonoma in F, The Rev Eric French
 All Hail to the Queen, Byward Street, ECH: 11am

Epworth, 11308th Family Church; east; open 12:00-5:00pm.
All Souls', Longhorn Place, WI; 9am Communion, 11:30am Family Service, Prebendary Richard Brown, & 4:30pm Open Service, The Rev Roy Rice
Children Of Our Church, Old Church Street, SW2; 8am HC, 10am Children's Service; 11am Mission, The Rev B. White, 12:15pm HC; open Epworth, The Rev P. Elvins
Beth Tabor, Brompton Road, SW7; 9am HC, 10:30am Family Service; 11am Informal Service, Mr Tim Silwell; 5pm Family Service, The Rev Simon Dowdall
7:30pm Informal Service, The Rev Simon Dowdall

11411 Schenck's Mall, Larchmont, NY 10503. Fr Kevin McCreary. 5:30pm Low Mass.

St Raphael's, Adagio, EC4: 10:00am Sung Eucharist. The Rev John Pearce.

St Ruffin's, Fleet Street, EC4: 11am Choral Matins and Eucharist. Canon John Oates; 6:30pm Choral Evensong. Canon John Oates.

St Edmund, Datchet, Stroud, WCC: 11am Matins. The Rev Robin Noble.

St Paulinus's, Pithburgh Gardens, SW5: 10am HC; 11am Sung Eucharist. The Right Rev Dr Geoffrey Rowell.

ALDI'S SAYLE AT WILSONS CINE CENTRE
See Critic's Choice. Tonight 8pm, Market
Square (01296-60409) £12.50.

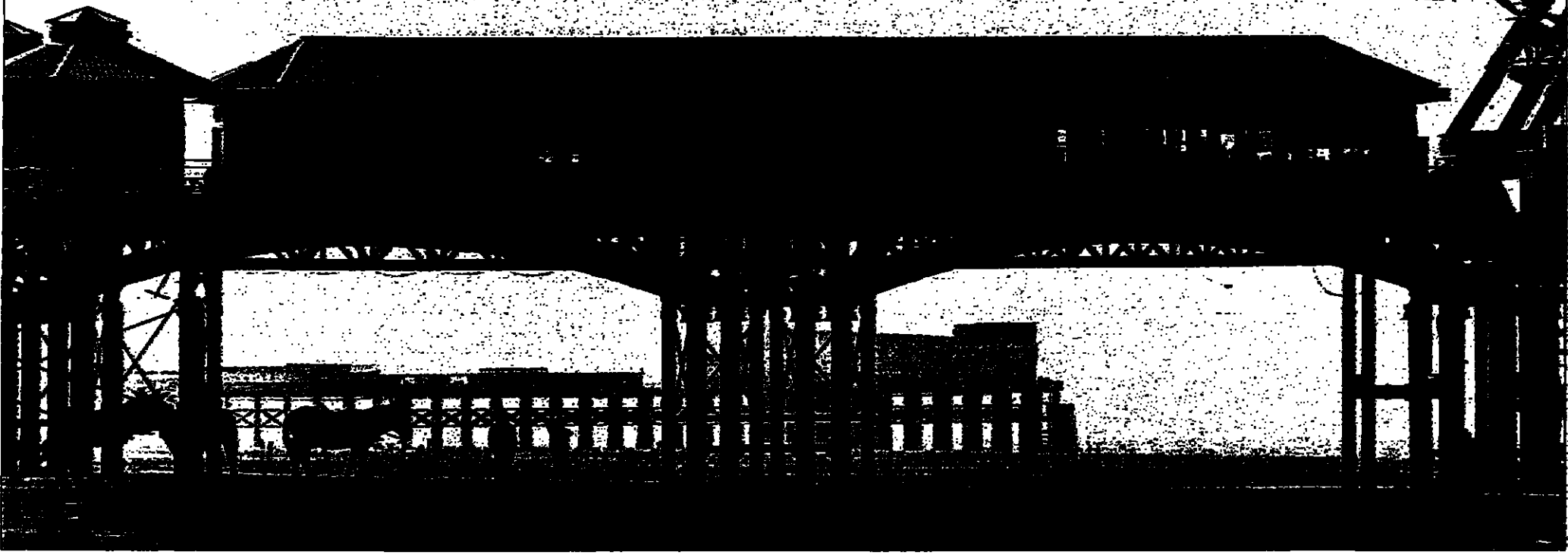
London

**COMEDY STORE: JO BRIDG, OTIS CANNELAND, KEITH
DOVER AT THE COMEDY STORE** Tonight 8pm &
11pm, 12, Haymarket House, Chancery
Lane (01-476-91433) @ Leicester Sq, £10.

classical
Cardiff
THE POINT
Music: Theatre Wales New production of
Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale*. Tonight 8pm. £8.

Blue skies over Blackpool

As the Tory conference opens, Simon Calder looks at England's first resort



One face of Blackpool's seaside entertainment – as archaic as Labour's 1983 manifesto, but the town also offers plenty of hi-tech pleasures

Photograph: Edward Webb

Cross-dressing, intrigue at number 10 and an acceleration in the rate of descent: these are some of the things that Conservative delegates can look forward to as they assemble in Blackpool this weekend. The first thing you see, as you approach the Lancashire resort across the flat Fylde peninsula, is the tip of the Tower.

But much more impressive than Blackpool's midge Eifel is the spectacular tangle of metalwork next door. The Pepsi Max Big One is claimed to be the world's largest and fastest roller-coaster, and its absurd angles and scarlet swirls of steel dominate the skyline. Politicians wishing to experience that sinking feeling should trudge through the amusements at the Pleasure Beach, past fine old timber roller-coasters that look as archaic as Labour's 1983 election manifesto. Like that document, traditional entertainment has fallen victim to Nineties' techno-glamour. Candidates for the Big One stump up a deposit of £3.50 and are funnelled through futuristic tubes and loaded into rocket-like cars (sit on the back benches

for the best view, as well as advance warning of each twist and turn that awaits you).

The next three minutes are tougher than a John Humphries interview on the *Today* programme. First you are winched tortuously slowly to the 235-foot-high summit, before a succession of unlikely g-forces grab you and drag you downwards at 85mph. After the initial plunge, you rebound upwards faster than you can say "opinion poll", and go on a hair-raising tour that seems to take you around half the town before depositing you again in a quivering heap.

A more sedate ride can be procured for as little as 70p on one of the town's trams. Last weekend, the world's first electric street tramway celebrated its 110th birthday. These creakily charming vehicles have stayed on the rails through every U-turn in transport policy. While the rest of Britain was ripping up tram tracks, Blackpool was exploring every design possibility in electric traction. So today you can ride on an open-air tram, a double-decker, and even an illuminated tram – which this year is

sponsored by the North West Lancashire Health Authority.

The trams rattle along a seafront that is Thatcherism run wild. The Golden Mile came into being at the end of the 19th century, when the traders were turfed off the beach and moved into the gardens of houses on the Promenade. Unrestrained market forces led to the creation of a sticky strip of vendors, selling candy floss, rock and the ultimate Blackpool cliché: the kiss-me-quick hat.

A move towards sophistication has seen part of the Promenade subtitled Ocean Boulevard (watch out California), but since July this year more attention has been focussed on the huge hangar of a building just across the road.

Number 10 is looking a little shaky. It is the last stop on the 90-minute orbit around the World of Coronation Street, Blackpool's newest attraction. Hilda Ogden's trio of flying ducks draw you into a orgy of nostalgia about Britain's best-loved soap opera. Even those who shun the serial in favour of *Westminster Live* and *Panorama* will enjoy the tale of how a terrace

in Salford became a national addiction. Sound-and-vision bites are augmented by apparitions: life-size holograms of Jack and Vera and Elsie Tanner ("The Street's Scarlet Woman" – and they don't mean socialist) materialise before you. The running commentary by Ken Barlow and Rita Sullivan is as patronising as any party political broadcast. But inside the wobbly exterior of number 10 Coronation Street, the Kabin newsagency, your dream of appearing in the programme can come true. Stand against a true blue background, and the wonders of colour separation overlay let you take part in a scene from the serial. Your speaking part is edited in, your name added to the credits and £10 prised easily from your party funds for the souvenir video.

Blackpool will put on its own show at 6.25 tonight, and every evening until Guy Fawkes' Night. Tory luminaries will find the Promenade blocked by thousands of lighters on a six-mile stretch of seafront. The profits of Norweb, the privatised regional electricity company, will be boosted by £60,000. The cost of what is offi-

cially Britain's biggest tourist attraction is offset by sponsorship: this year, Carlisle's very own trucking legend Eddie Stobart has paid for fibre-glass models of his trucks to be up in lights.

The Secretary of State for National Heritage may wish to celebrate Blackpool's tourism ascendancy, but Virginia Bottomley may be less impressed by the pinnacle of the resort's nightlife. Not Little and Large, nor the blue banter of Roy "Chubby" Brown, but Funny Girls on Queen Street. Even when the Tories aren't in town, it is hard to pick the men from the girls in this riotous club. The theory and practice of transvestism is the theme at Funny Girls, and all the staff from the cabaret artistes to the glass collector are men in drag. The show outrages until 11pm every night, and this week its regular clientele of thrill-seekers will be boosted by a marginal constituency of journalists and politicians, seeking to make the most of their stay and getting thoroughly exhausted in the process. To paraphrase the late Harold Wilson, a week can be a long time in Blackpool.

How to get there

Britain's strangest air route will take you to Blackpool from Gatwick. Jersey European flight 170 begins at the Sussex airport, and calls in at Belfast and the Isle of Man before arriving at Squire's Gate airport (just past the Pepsi Max Big One in the south of the town). A return ticket costs £164.

The Macmillan government saw to the closure of Blackpool Central station, and inter-city trains to Blackpool North were ended under the present regime; long-distance rail travellers have to change at Preston these days. If you are travelling from a constituency such as, say, Huntingdon, a Supersaver to Blackpool North costs £40 (change at Peterborough and York, not valid on Fridays). The cheapest fare from London is an Apex return of £31.

Where to stay

"You're staying at the Sheraton." A few conferences back, some BBC journalists were delighted to hear this news from their management. But the cheery Hotel Sheraton (01253 352723) is a family concern that has no connection with the international hotel group, and does not have quite the same range of facilities. While the hacks were less than overjoyed, any normal visitor will probably be happy with B&B at the Sheraton for £36 single/£68 double.

Those who are looking for Blackpool's best will be dismayed to learn that the Imperial Hotel (01253 23971) is fully booked: not just for the Tory conference, but for most of October.

Who to ask

Blackpool tourist information: 01253 21623.

TRAILS OF THE UNEXPECTED

More than just a football team and railway junction. Welcome to Watford

Who in their right mind would want to visit Watford? The traffic system is a nightmare, for a start, and the town hardly sounds a place to see the best of Britain. Yet this old Hertfordshire market town has Tudor almshouses, a superb park, one of the finest of all Victorian churches and – not least – was the birthplace of the Fig Tree Legend.

Catch a train to Watford Junction, which is easy because of the frequency of the service. Leave by the main entrance and turn up Clarendon Road. This was originally fronted by Victorian villas, a few of which survive, sandwiched between glitzy office buildings.

At the top, cowering beside the orbital nightmare that is the inner ring road, is Beechen Grove Baptist church. Recent refurbishment means that its vivid red-brick exterior of 1877 causes unsuspecting pedestrians to leap in surprise. Cross the road and admire the Palace Theatre, a testament to Edwardian showmanship. Opened in 1908 as a music hall, it has played host to such stars as Little Tich, Marie Lloyd, Stan Laurel and even a young Charlie Chaplin.

Turn left down the high street and stroll past two excellent bank buildings, first a Lloyds of 1889 and then an Edwin Lutyens' gem for the

Holy Rood church
Photo: Simon Calder



Midland: it has an exquisite flattened dome which looks a bit like the lid of an exotic teapot. Keep going down the High Street, past the Blockbusters video store which occupies a glass pyramid, and then cross over into the lower section of the High Street.

The River Colne flows nearby and its ford, together with "Wath", an Old English word for hunting, gave the town its name. The plentiful supply of water from the Colne attracted brewers, particularly the Benskin family who lived in an attractive Georgian mansion. This now houses the excellent Watford Museum. It details the story of Odhams, the printers who moved to the outskirts of Watford in 1936, and, as you might expect, there is a section entirely devoted to football and

How to get there

Watford Junction station has direct connections from London Euston, Milton Keynes, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Why you should go in the next fortnight

The Watford Artsink Festival begins today and runs until 22 October.

Watford's most famous supporter, Elton John.

Retrace your steps and just past King Street turn left towards the parish church of St Mary's. Facing it are two beauties: the old Free School of 1704, built for "the teaching of 40 poor boys and 14 poor girls of Watford in good literature and manners".

By the south-east corner of the church is a tomb which gave birth to the Fig Tree Legend. The story goes that a wealthy woman was determined to prove there was no God. She ordered seeds to be placed in her coffin on the understanding that if no tree grew after her death, then God was indeed dead. A fig tree duly sprouted, which for many years attracted sightseers. Shame to ruin a good story but the tree, in fact,

Who to ask

The town does not have a tourist information centre. You can call the local council on 01923 226400, extension 2840, or ring the East Anglia Tourist Board on 01473 822922.

To tour the Church of Holy Rood

Call Father Bernard on 01923 224085 for details.

sprang out of the church vault. And it did not survive the severe winter of 1963.

Leave the church, averting your eyes from the hideous car park, and walk up Exchange Road. At the junction with Market Street is the wonderful Church of the Holy Rood – if it wasn't in unfashionable Watford it would be under permanent siege by tourists. The inside takes your breath away. It was designed by J F Bentley, the architect responsible for Westminster Cathedral. He was fortunate to be working here for a rich local benefactor, Mr Holland – a man so wealthy that he had his own personal railway station.

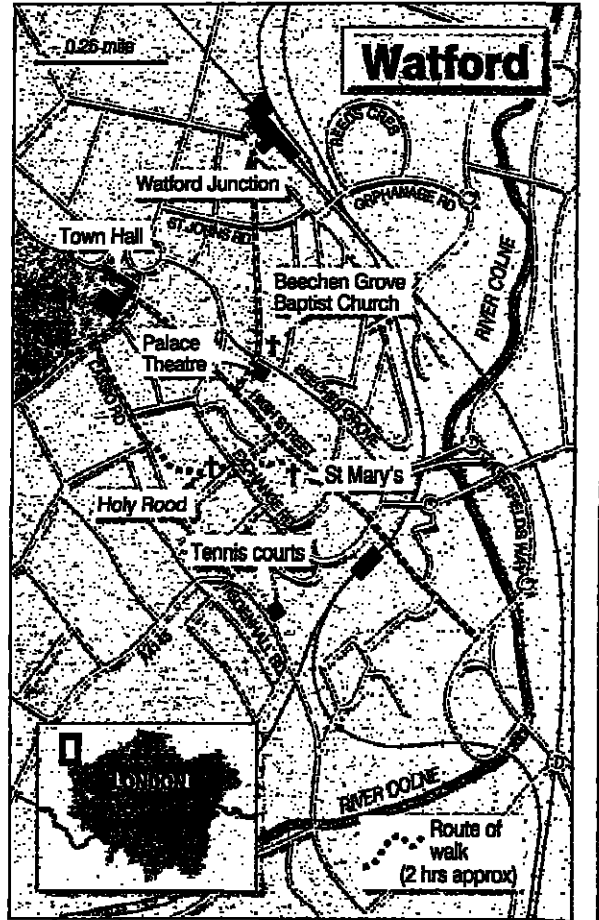
Holy Rood was officially opened in 1890 and Bentley continued working on it until his death in 1902. The detail, colouring and craftsmanship

offer a sensuous feast for the eye: the vaulting in the chapel and baptistry, the marble and tiles by the altar, the elegant light fittings. Nothing was skimped – not even the squirrel at the foot of the pulpit.

After such bravura, a period of repose is needed. Meander through the side streets and into Cassiobury Park. For centuries the grounds were home to the Earls of Essex who had enough clout to stop the railway coming through their property – which is why the line between London and Birmingham curves gently around Watford. The earls' Cassiobury House was pulled down in 1927 but the park was spared development.

Leaving the park, stroll up Rickmansworth Road. On the left is the Peace Memorial Hospital, a neo-Georgian building, now empty. Take the subway towards what is effectively the top end of the High Street. It is difficult to believe that the pond in front of you was once frequented by horse and cattle. Pass underneath the flyover which bizarrely crosses over the high street and on the right is the final delight, a grouping of Elizabethan timber-frame houses now occupied by a jeweller. On the left is Clarendon Road and the way to the station.

Andrew Davies



LOOK BEFORE YOU BOOK



When you see the ABTA symbol, you know your holiday is protected. Every travel agent and tour operator in our membership operates under our strict codes of conduct and has passed our rigorous checks on their financial security. So in the unlikely event that they should fail financially, we'll ensure that it's not your holiday that suffers. For a leaflet containing the full story on what ABTA offers you, call 0171 307 1991.



Any Sunday you can catch a bus to the former Soviet Union. Martin Skirrow climbed aboard at Victoria

Airlines from what used to be called the Eastern bloc have sometimes been unfairly maligned. I used to clean out planes at Gwardia. The air crew who showed the most civility were invariably the stewardesses of Aeroflot and Balkan Bulgarian, who used to sneak us glasses of fruit juice. On a hot summer's day on the melting airport apron this small kindness was greatly appreciated. In those days "communist" aircraft were parked at distant stands and guarded for the duration of their stay by members of Special Branch, while we cleaners fraternised clandestinely with the "enemy", drinking *enroute cordial*.

Fax: 0171 293 2505

**continues
on
page 20.**

Snow's up

By Chris Gill
skiing correspondent

In a season when many British skiers are going to find existence in an Alpine ski resort painfully expensive because of the continuing slide of the pound against the Austrian, French and Swiss currencies, the question of where to ski on the cheap assumes wider importance.

Anyone who keeps an eye on exchange rates (or who studies brochure prices) will be aware that Italy, in contrast, has become cheaper. But there is no doubt that for rock-bottom prices, you need to head east.

Bulgaria and Romania have a worthwhile edge over other budget destinations – on average, a one-week package in a three-star hotel is likely to be £60 to £90 cheaper than Andorra or a cheap Italian resort. But it's the on-the-spot prices that are strikingly low. Lift passes in eastern Europe work out at around £50 to £60 a week, against £80 to £90 in Italy and £100 to £140 elsewhere in the Alps. Ski school, too, is cheaper than elsewhere – although precise comparison is complicated by variations in hours of tuition. Equipment hire, curiously, is not cheaper than in a cheap Italian resort.

Day-to-day incidental expenses are low, too; but not as low as they once were – it appears that locals have realised they can jack up prices without losing business. This is particularly true in après-ski bars and nightclubs. You may find beer at 50p a bottle, but it's more likely to be £1 to £2.

Apart from prices, there is another factor at work: there isn't a lot to spend your money on. Mountain restaurants are best viewed as pit stops for rehydration and sustenance: the range of food is limited and the quality low, though many visitors seem to find the appallingly primitive local main drawback. Après-ski expenditure is likely to be limited to straightforward drinks. Ruinous early-evening tours of patisseries and clothes shops are not a problem.

The most popular resorts are Poiana Brasov in Romania and Borovets and Pamporovo in Bulgaria. None offers very extensive or difficult skiing, none offers much to do other than ski, and all rely heavily on low cost to attract custom from the West; but there are differences between them.

Poiana Brasov consists of hotels dotted around a spacious wooded plateau, and little else. The ski area is very limited, and the lifts hardly adequate, even in low season (weekend queues are serious). But the locals are friendly, and tuition is good.

Borovets is similar, but has more of a village feel, partly because there are bars and restaurants dotted around – there is quite a lot of après-ski action. The ski area is eastern Europe's biggest, although with only 40km of piste it is smaller than practically any area you will find in the Alps; and it is almost all of intermediate difficulty.

Pamporovo is smaller, quieter and less commercialised. Its ski area is about half the size, and practically all easy.

Eastern Europe sounds a good bet for family holidays. Some of the resorts, too, suit people with small children; the nursery at Borovets' Hotel Rila gets good reports. Far outweighing these considerations, to my mind, is the sad fact that medical facilities in Bulgaria and Romania are as primitive as the restaurants and the loo. I personally wouldn't want to expose my kids to the risk of being hospitalised in Borovet.

So, is it the people, the light or the architecture that makes Pecs the prettiest place in Hungary?

By Darius Sanai

The old couple on the train said that Pecs was the most beautiful town in Hungary. "It's the light," she said, leaning forward and straightening her long floral skirt, "it's like the Mediterranean."

He, hugging a salami as if it were a baby, pushed his glasses back up his nose and contradicted her. "No, no, it's the people. The people are so happy because they live there. They know they're living in the best place in Hungary." The two proceeded to exchange a series of heated mutters in Hungarian. "Anyway," the salami man said, looking defeated, "it's really beautiful."

Pecs is Hungary's southernmost city, a four-hour train ride due south from Budapest, not far from the Croatian border. It's in a beautiful setting, squeezed up against forested hills on one side, the other end of town blending into vineyards which produce some of the country's best Chardonnay.

It is one of the most culturally enriched cities in Europe: established initially by the Romans, conquered by the Magyars, then seized by the Ottoman Turks and finally settled by Germans 300 years ago. It's also in a forgotten corner – so far south it's largely free of the crowds of German and Austrian tourists who are turning the towns of the Danube Bend and Lake Balaton into a kind of central European Costa Brava.

Everywhere in town, there were girls and women carrying small bunches of flowers. At the Szechenyi Ter, the central square, two young women in matching silk blouses and perfectly white skirts were sitting on a bench, each holding a small bunch of pansies. "We wait for boyfriends," said one, giggling a little and flicking back a lock of chestnut-coloured hair. "You're giving them flowers? "Yes, why not? Flowers are beautiful, no?"

I wandered around for five days with an innocent look on my face, thinking this could be the one and only time in my life a woman would give me flowers. But it didn't work.

Because of its southern



Pecs tends to leave visitors architecturally bemused: 16th, 17th and 18th century buildings are elegantly jumbled together

Robert Harding

location, Pecs is considered the "Mid" of this landlocked country, and since the fall of Communism a café culture has sprung up. In the Rozskaert, a garden café nestled in the shade of lime trees by the imposing cathedral, I had a superb venison goulash, flavoured with fiery paprika, and some glasses of Egri Bikaver, Bull's Blood wine – the only red wine strong enough to match the food.

The central square is dominated by what used to be one of the finest mosques in central Europe, the mosque of Gazi Kossim Pasha, built by the Ottoman Turks in the 16th century. It has since been turned into a Catholic church, but it was plainly a mosque from its domed outline and structure, and is all the more



striking for this. The Hungarians generally destroyed all traces of the Ottoman invasion.

The town square tends to leave visitors architecturally bemused. Buildings from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries are jumbled together. The main cathedral, the Dom, is an imposing, neo-Gothic structure with four huge towers

and a remarkable collection of ecclesiastical robes, crucifixes and rings stretching back to the 11th century in its crypt.

The Little Mosque is the only fully preserved Turkish monument in Hungary, its interior contains intricate murals and tapestries, and antique carpets. Pecs is nearer to Istanbul than to Brussels

(though the locals won't thank you for telling them this) and here you really feel this. The city has one of the most extreme climates in central Europe: sweltering summers, and winters with winds blowing in off the Steppes of Russia. I had three days of warm sunshine and two days of freezing rain.

The town's wealth of museums provided a more than adequate distraction from the weather. One is dedicated to the artist Victor Vasarely; another, the Zsolnay, is lined with case upon case of antique porcelain, and an archaeological museum of prehistory in the region. "Prehistory" is deemed to stop with the Magyar conquest in the late 9th century – the Magyars being the ancestors of today's Hungarians.

How to get there

British Airways (0345 222111) and the Hungarian airline Malev (0171-439 0577) each fly twice daily between Heathrow and Budapest. The lowest official fare on both airlines is £213.50 including tax, with an extra £10 in either direction for travel on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Agents can usually undercut these fares: Hamilton Travel (0171-344 3344) has a fare of £165 return on Malev's morning flight. To reach Pecs, the simplest option is the train from Budapest; the journey takes around four hours for a fare of £12.

How to get in

British passport holders no longer require a visa for Hungary.

Where to stay

Darius Sanai paid £20 a night for a single room at the clean and pleasant Hotel Vig Apad, near the station at Martiok utca 14, 7623 Pecs (00 36 72 31 33 40).

Who to ask

The Hungarian National Tourist Office is at PO Box 4336, London SW18 4XE; call a premium-rate number, 0891 171200, for recorded information.

Moving to more modern times, the Donauschwaben, the Swabians of the Danube, arrived in Pecs 300 years ago. They were skilled farmers sent by the Austro-Hungarian empress, Maria Theresa, to fill the empty spaces left after the Ottoman retreat. There are still almost 200,000 of them, and they produce most of the wine in the rolling hills to the south of Pecs. Because of its isolation, this district is one of the most beautiful wine-growing areas in Europe. Renting a car from Pecs, I spent a day and an evening happily tasting Chardonnay and Riesling in Villany, a little village just south of the town. "Mmm, melons and peaches on the palate," I remarked ponderously. "No, that's Chardonnay, this is Riesling," hissed my companion.



something to declare

Visitors' Book Tram Museum, Prague

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— Donald Haggood, Chislehurst (whose entry is followed by a sketch of a London Transport tram)

"Could do with system maps showing the history."

— Roger Long, Chislehurst

"Keep on saving them."

— John Preston, Lowestoft

"My favourite is the Mayor's tram, done out like a sitting room. I'd like to have one in the back garden for tea-taking."

— CH, London

"Save the world – use a tram."

— Anon

Travel writing competition

The first deadline of the academic year is fast approaching: entries for 1995 Student Travel Writing Competition must reach us by 14 October. First prize – two round-trip tickets to Sydney provided by Campus Travel, and the latest edition of the *Rough Guide to Australia*. Second prize – two Young Europe Special airfares from Lufthansa which allow extensive travel on the airline's network. Ten runners up will receive the latest *Rough Guide to Venice*.

To enter, write an account – no more than 500 words – of a single incident in your travels this summer, on the subject "A misunderstanding".

Entrants should submit one article only, typewritten and previously unpublished, to Student Travel Writing Competition, Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL by 14 October 1995. The results of the competition will be published on 28 October.

Entrants must be full-time students, aged under 25 on 1 September 1995 and enrolled at UK universities or colleges.

The competition is not open to employees – or their relatives – of Newspaper Publishing plc, Rough Guides or Campus Travel.

The judges' decision will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

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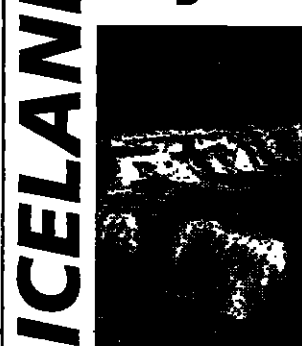
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The company also offers a 12-day cruise of Ukrainian waterways from Kiev south to Odessa. Highlights include a day with the Cossacks in Zaporozhye and a visit to Mikhail Gorbachev's former dacha in the Black Sea resort of Foros – where the president was held during the August 1991 coup. The price is £935, and includes flights with Austrian Airlines via Vienna.

Eastern Europe will become more accessible by air from 29 October, when the new winter schedules bring more flights from Gatwick to Bucharest and Moscow with British Airways (0345 222111), as well as a new daily service from London to Heathrow to Prague by British Midland (0345 554554).

Fares to Prague are relatively high at present: discounts are hard to find – the lowest published fare on British Airways or CSA Czech Airlines (0171-255 1898) is £214. Major Travel offers about the best at £207. If you are prepared to travel on selected CSA flights – notably the Sunday morning departure from London – the fare falls to around £160.

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The day the monks could not smile



A monk walks around the Sangacholing monastery near Pemayangtse. Photograph: Caroline Seed

There were sinister undercurrents at one of the red-and-gold monasteries Caroline Seed visited in the Himalayan state of Sikkim

The first hint that something might be wrong was the look on the monks' faces. Usually they returned a smile triple-fold, but today they didn't even see me. Then fierce-looking soldiers, dressed from head to toe in protective clothing - including full-face helmets - pounded past. For a moment I gazed at the red-and-gold monastery, the massive swept courtyard, and wondered if I had had too much *longba* the night before. The last thing I expected to see in Sikkim's Dharma Chakra Centre was a riot squad.

But tiny, jewel-like Sikkim had been a surprise in any case. Flanked by Nepal and Bhutan, it also sits uncomfortably between India and China. In the mid-Seventies it lost its independence and was insidiously annexed by India. Our group of six had flown from Delhi to Bagdogra, the nearest airport, to find there was a strike. "Any particular sort of strike?" we asked. Every person is on strike we were informed as we were dumped in the town of Siliguri, which

was definitely not on our itinerary.

Twenty-four hours later we were switch-backing our way up and down hillsides, diving for the other side of the bus whenever we had completed a hair-pin bend; we wanted to ensure our weight was in the right place each time a rear tyre spun over the vertical drop. The rocky sides of the narrow road were littered with quirky homilies: "Speed is thrilling and also killing" and "If you want to donate blood please do it in the blood bank and not on the road". We couldn't have agreed more, and continued to behave like ocean-racing sailors as the scenery flashed past. In a landscape of dry earth and teak trees, monkeys sat beside the road picking nuts from each other's fur; then we saw a group of women on a bridge also picking nuts from each other's hair; the mighty Tista River thundered down from the mountains; houses were daubed white and ochre with crimson petals spilling over balconies. The bus swept pigs, chickens and goats aside as we bowed north-

How to get there

Welcome Travel (0171-439 3627) has non-stop flights on Air India between London and Delhi for £475 in October. For a much cheaper trip to the Indian capital, Turkmenistan Airlines operates weekly from both Birmingham and Heathrow to Delhi via Ashkhabad for £270, through Unique Tours & Travel (0171-495 4848). From Delhi, you can reach the airport in Bagdogra for \$274 (about £175) return on Indian Airlines.

When to go

The best months for trekking and

wards, for Sikkim's capital, Gangtok. In 1942, David Macdonald wrote that Gangtok was not an impressive town and that it was painfully in the making. In 1995 nothing seemed to have changed.

Unlike Nepal, this Himalayan state is not overflowing with temples, and palaces or markets, but it does have

generally travelling around Sikkim are October/November and December/January. There may be some rain in April and May. Monsoon months are from mid-June to mid-September.

How to get in

Consult the Indian High Commission, India House, Aldwych, London WC2B 4NA (0171-836 8484) for visas and the special permit required for Sikkim.

Who to ask

Government of India Tourist Office, 7 Cork St, London W1X 1PB (0171-437 3677).

good roads - and there are no crowds. It is neither hidden nor forbidden, but as far as an earthly paradise goes, each of our group unhesitatingly gave it the thumbs up. Hues of emerald predominated in the hills: the lush green of cardamom, velvet carpets of grass, mosses, lichens and ferns clinging to gorges. Kingfishers darted past waterfalls,

woodpeckers ratt-atat-tatted and thrushes whistled and trilled.

We visited monasteries and saw rare *thangkhas* (holy pictures) and countless prayer wheels. I became a devoted fan of Buddhist monks: when you smile at them they smile back, their whole bodies creasing in delight, but if you don't they look as grave and serious as if everyone else in the world had died.

The road west, to Pemayangtse, was a tarmac ledge hewn out of the rock-face of the gigantic cliffs, hundreds of feet above the ribbon of river below. Some parts of the road had crumbled, and as our little red bus crawled past we unitedly chanted between clenched teeth "Slow has four letters, so has life".

Pemayangtse is the gateway for trekkers up to Dzongri and the base of Mount Kanchenjunga. I viewed the mountains from my hotel room at dawn in shock. The sun had beaten the haze back, and the mighty Kanchenjunga, the third highest peak in the world, glinted and dazzled before me, while at its base mist curled and wisped

across the forest. Little wonder one of Sikkim's oldest and most important monasteries was just around the corner.

I was addicted to monasteries after that. Two of us kept defecting from the tour to drench ourselves in the perfume of incense and burning butter candles, the hypnotic chanting and the occasional lesson from a twinkling-eyed monk.

Which is why I was somewhat baffled at the army lined on the ramparts of Rumtek Monastery, peering down the mountainside as they slapped their batons agitatedly in their palms. What were they protecting? The monastery? The 17th Karmapa himself? Tibetan Buddhism as we know it?

I was right on all three counts. Suddenly the good roads made sense; they may not be dual carriageways but a crocodile of armoured vehicles would have little trouble scrambling northwards, if needs be. For behind the Buddha's smile is a very big Peoples' Republic that would quite like to extend its boundaries by swallowing pint-sized Sikkim in a single gulp.

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road test Vauxhall Vectra



Does the new Vauxhall Vectra look any different from the Vauxhall Cavalier? You'd be forgiven for thinking not. Most people simply wouldn't spot the difference. Its door mirrors constitute the sole stylistic flourish, blending so effectively into the bodywork that they appear to have spouted from it. That, however, is it. But Vauxhall knows that people will not buy the Vectra to make a style statement. They want a convenient car, and that's just what this Vauxhall is.

Leaving aside the fact that its driving position leaves too little room between thigh and wheel rim (an error Vauxhall is racing to correct), the interior of a Vectra is very pleasant - airy, comfortable and particularly thoughtfully designed. You will, for instance, find a device to carry a pair of opened Coke cans in the centre console, and another drinks holder beneath an armrest bridging the front seats. You will find plenty of places to put things, easily manipulated controls, a crisp, powerful stereo and much else. Just as pleasing is that the Vectra is well mannered, something you could not say of its predecessor. The Cavalier just didn't get along with bumpy roads, which would have it bucking and jerking as if it were made for a different road network. Couple this with an awkward gear change, a clutch that made smooth progress a hard-won goal and engines that tended towards the coarse, and you had a car that felt cruder than it really was. The new Vectra sees all these problems fixed, and the Cavalier's strong points - sound performance, fair economy, good roadholding, robust construction - firmly built upon.

Pounding the motorway is likely to be the Vectra's most frequent task. For this is the quintessential company car. That it will often be passenger-less is just as well because the interior is not as spacious as it should be. The Renault Laguna and the Toyota Carina offer more. Its best-selling rival, the Ford Mondeo, does not however, but that car still has the edge over the Vauxhall in several areas. Keener steering, a superior gearchange, a much better driving position, a slightly more convenient, if less attractive, fascia layout and stouter performance are among them. The Vauxhall strikes back with anti-lock brakes, a smoother ride, a more inviting cabin, and more quiet and more homogenous looks.

If the message you're getting is that it's a close run thing, then you're right - the standard among the best of this class is high. Vectra, Laguna, Mondeo, it doesn't matter which you buy, because you'll be getting a damn good car. And something better than a Cavalier.

Richard Bremner

Specifications

Vauxhall Vectra 1.8i GLS £14,780
Engine: four cylinder, twin overhead camshaft
16v, 1796cc, 113bhp at 6,400rpm, 125lb ft of torque at 2,400rpm. 5-speed man. gear-box. Performance: 0-62mph in 12.5 seconds, top speed 125mph. Fuel cons. 32mpg

Rivals

Citroën Xantia 1.8i SX £13,980 New 16-valve engine fixes the sluggish acceleration and noise of older models.
Ford Mondeo 1.8i GLX £14,465 Beats Vauxhall on performance and but less comfortable.
Renault Laguna RT 2.0 £13,035 Roomy, very comfortable, easy drive, strong roadholding.
Rover 416 Si £13,895 Worth considering, but not quite the all-rounder that the others are.

A supercar for a snip (£19,000)



The Maserati 3500 GT. £19,000 from Pulicino Classics. Photo: Philip Mesch

By James Ruppert

Most of us have not got the cash to match our driving dreams. Supercars are indulgent, impractical and above all expensive. Even a millionaire might think twice at stump-up the £635,000 plus VAT required to put a brand new McLaren F1 on the road. However, by rummaging around the used car market, thinking laterally and buying wisely it is still possible to join the supercar club for less than £20,000.

To qualify as a supercar, a vehicle must be hand built and have a name to conjure with, so romantic monikers with a sporting pedigree such as Ferrari, Lotus, Maserati and Porsche all help. Styling will be sleek and sexy, which means a low body profile combined with an attention-grabbing profile. The engine is likely to be where the luggage and rear passengers are usually kept, so you won't have much room for the shopping. And, of course, the performance (that you will never be able to use) on the right side of 150mph.

If we feel nervous buying a modest supercar, then we should be utterly terrified of the prospect of a supercar. Not only is there plenty that

can go wrong, it will also go wrong in the most expensive way possible. Open the bonnet and stare in awe at the V12 quad camshaft heart of the monster, could you tell if it was firing on only 11 cylinders? That Rosso Red paintwork may look gorgeous, but are there any indications that underneath lurks some equally red rot?

Either buy from a respected specialist in the marque, or use one to check the supercar over. It takes years of experience to spot a second-hand supercar that won't bite back in terms of repairs or dangerous mechanical disintegration.

Research your marque: buy the expensive coffee table books. Join the owners club and become a supercar bore. Then you will know roughly what you are looking at, and what you should find in three things: history, history, and history. If there isn't plenty of evidence that previous owners have lavished a fortune on the thing and have the bills, service records and receipts to prove it, don't bother. The real secret to paying so little for the privilege of owning a supercar, is to choose the right model.

No one thinks they could afford a Ferrari, but there are two Ferraris, in particular, which commit the supercar sin of being vaguely practical. Both the 308 GT4 and its successor, the Modia, have a 2+2 configuration that does not please the purists. To everyone else these cars just look like slightly longer Ferraris. And there are plenty around. Too. Pulicino Classics in Wandsworth, London, has a large selection of exotics. When I visited, a blue 1979 308 was retailing for £18,995. Further afield at Edmond Harris in Oxfordshire was a pair of Mondials - an early 1982 '8' model at £15,000 and a later 1985 QV for £18,950.

When it came to seeking out equally charismatic Italian machinery I did not have to stray from Pulicino's premises. Among their Maseratis was a temptingly cheap 1978 Kyalami at £8,950. Looking more the supercar part was a 1960 Maserati 3.500 GT for £19,000 and a pair of Lamborghinis - a left hand drive Urraco P250 for £17,000 and a flashy Eighties Jalpa for £2,000 more. But there is no reason to shop exclusively for Italian cars. Britain builds supercars, too. The Lotus

Esprit Turbo is cheap enough when new and almost a giveaway when used. A reputation for poor build quality and a dated design has not helped values, but canny buyers get one of the best handling and fastest supercars ever. At Barry Ely's small east London premises there were two immaculate examples, a 1989 Turbo in white with red leather selling for £16,495 and another finished in red that was two years older and £2,000 cheaper.

France's only supercar is the Alpine V6 Turbo and everything about it is right, except the parent company's name, Renault. What supercar snobs are missing is 150mph performance, the classic rear engine layout, and the distinctive looks that keep everyone guessing as to what exotic model it is. Eurotec Classic cars, in Wareham, Dorset, had a 1989 model for just £10,950. Purchased new it would have cost close to the £30,000.

By contrast, everything about a Porsche is right, from the heraldic bonnet badge to the purposeful styling and supreme build quality. It is the 911 which turns all the heads, and

many models from the mid Eighties can be bought for less than £20,000, although the top-of-the-range Turbo is a borderline case at our hypothetical budget. However, why choose the obvious when Porsche's forgotten supercar, in the shape of the 928, is so very cheap. Its conventional V8 water cooled engine, radically (for Porsche) mounted at the front of the car, did not convince many buyers. Yet it is a stunningly competent car and even main dealers such as Dick Lovett in Swindon price the cars realistically. A 1988 Sport was going for £16,500 and a 1990 S4 was priced at a smidgen over £20,000 (£21,000 new). It is fast, reliable and utterly intoxicating.

Best of all though, a 928 is a supercar that you can use every day. The trouble is: would you be able to afford the running costs?

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Barry Ely Sports Cars 0181 558 3221
Eurotec Classic Cars 01929 400711



GAVIN GREEN

Amid all the brouhaha over the launch of the new MGF, one important fact has been overlooked: the new MG proves that Rover can make cars on its own again.

The MGF is the first go-it-alone Rover since the Montego, 11 years ago. Every Rover since, and a few before, were based on Hondas. Different body styling, sometimes, different engines, occasionally, and leather and wood, invariably, to try to transmogrify dull little Japanese cars into stylish English ones. But, in every case, from 200 to 400 to 600 to 800, every new Rover has essentially been a tarted-up Honda.

What's doubly pleasing about the MGF is that it is such a good car; a more impressive engineering achievement than any of the Honda-Rovers. The Honda-Rover

alliance, let us not forget, was never more than a marriage of convenience. Like most such liaisons, it gave Honda a way into Europe, preparatory to building its own factory and own cars here (in Swindon).

And for Rover, it was an engineering lifeline, thrown when the company was deep in the financial mire. Never mind that Honda refused Rover access to first-grade engineering information, nor that most Rover-Hondas have been based on ageing Hondas rather than new-wave models. Without Honda, Rover may very well have gone belly-up.

BMW's take-over means it won't. And the excellence of the MGF means it doesn't deserve to. The MGF presages an era of new Rover-Rover cars, with a bit of

help from BMW. They will be front-drive saloons, use mostly Rover-developed engines and Rover suspensions, and use bespoke Rover-designed bodies. They will not be based on BMWs, let alone Hondas.

Most importantly, they should also bring some brand consistency back to Rover. The Honda-Rovers are competent cars: reliable, easy to drive, handy, uncomplicated. But they stand for nothing: how can they do otherwise, when they are the products of two makers with such contrasting philosophies?

The upshot is that Rover's image, so strong 30 years ago, now stands for little. Rover's management hasn't helped. Changing the name earlier this year of the Metro to the Rover 100, complete with chrome grille, is not consistent

with trying to position Rover as an upmarket marque: one that should stand above hot polloi (meaning Ford and Vauxhall).

All - or nearly all - car makers can make good cars cheaply; that was one of the industrial achievements of the Eighties. But what distinguishes Rover from Honda (or for that matter Kia, Daewoo, Hyundai or any other of the Third World arrivistes) is its tradition. It has a heritage.

BMW is one of the acknowledged masters of brand protection and promotion. If you drive a BMW 3-series, you simply drive a BMW. It is an important difference. If you drive a Rover, who knows what you're driving? What is the commonality between a Rover 100 and an 800? There is none, other than that both cars are outclassed

in their respective sectors, and that they have chrome grilles and the same badges.

BMW will help change that. It wants to emphasise the traditional values of Rover. It wants Rovers to be very British again, rather like four-wheeled versions of a Savile Row suit. It wants Rovers thought of as cheaper Jaguars. This is an attractive proposition, and an attainable one.

With the MGF, Rover has proved that it can build great cars by itself again. It has also proved, with the Rover 100, that it fundamentally misunderstands the minutiae of marketing and brand protection. BMW can help a little with the former, and a lot with the latter. We may, once again, be on the verge of a great chapter in the history of the nation's car maker.

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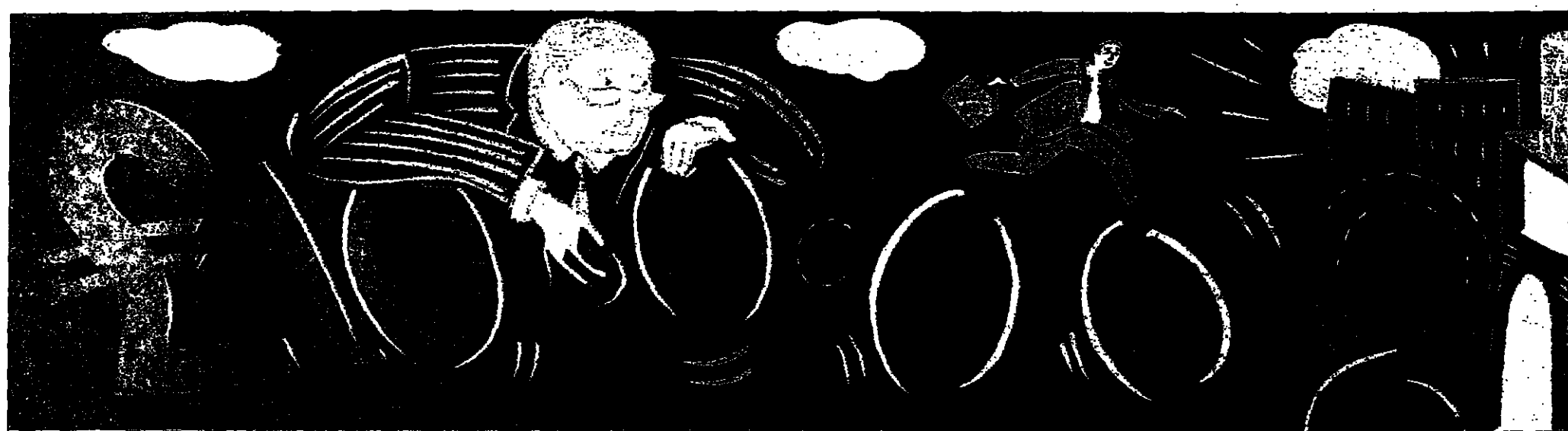
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Portfolio management is no longer the preserve of the very wealthy. But does it really suit the smaller investor?

By Frances Howell



INSIDE STORIES

Fowl advice

Should you buy an ostrich?
page 24

High street blues

How to beat falling savings rates
page 25

Investments

Jonathan Davies on fool's gold
page 25

You used to need at least £100,000 if you wanted savings invested for you. But fund managers are now increasingly offering the service to those with as little as £10,000 to invest.

In January, Rothschild Asset Management launched its Private Portfolio Service, offering savers with £10,000 a choice of four investment strategies. New money is coming in at the rate of £1m per week. Mercury Asset Management, which already has the largest portfolio growth fund, has seen its income portfolio take £15m since its launch in August 1994.

Schroders is considering launching an all-encompassing portfolio fund this year. It will include fixed-interest securities and cash as well as equities, and will be aimed at "the investor who wants their savings to be conservatively managed and safe". But can you really get a £100,000 service for one-tenth of the price?

Although private portfolio funds are marketing themselves as suited to the personal requirements of the investor, do not expect a portfolio individually tailored to your idiosyncrasies, or indeed a stockbroker to talk to you every day. What you may be offered, and this varies from fund to fund, is a choice of invest-

Before you invest

Make sure you get independent and ongoing financial advice. While you do get regular reports with a portfolio management service, it can be difficult to gauge the fund manager's performance. The annual report of the fund should show how your money has performed against a typical building society account, inflation and the various stock market indices. But it will not compare the performance with that of competing funds. Unless, of course, you happen to have chosen the best-performing fund.

ment strategies, ranging from simple income/growth to up to four variations on this theme. Your £10,000 is then pooled with your co-investors' savings in a unit trust.

Most of these unit trusts are funds of funds. The investor is exposed, therefore, to a double tier of charges: first, to the entry and annual management fees of the portfolio fund unit trust,

and, second, to the same fees for the sub-trusts the portfolio fund has bought into. So the performance of the underlying stocks is trimmed twice. Rothschilds is adamant these charges are easily outweighed by the benefits. "The size of our funds, currently over £100m, gives us significant buying power, which enables us to achieve significant discounts. This makes our performance more effective," says William Ramsay. "We are also providing a service. We administer all funds, carrying out asset allocation and fund selection; we handle all the paperwork and provide detailed six-monthly reports for the clients and their advisers, together with a helpline for investors."

Richard Clarke of MAM insists portfolio funds are more than just re-packaged unit trusts. "The Portfolio Fund replicates what would be a typical asset allocation of a UK-based client with assets of £250,000 or more. The range of investments is generally wider than other unit trusts. The Portfolio Fund is aimed at the person who wants to put money in and forget about it. It is lower risk than most other equity funds and, although equities form the core, there is also a cash element. You also get quarterly, and

not half-yearly, personal statements."

Rothschilds says its private portfolio service is not a simple fund of funds but a tightly automated investment structure. Each of the investment strategies involves appropriately weighted investment in sub-trusts concentrating on particular geographic investment areas.

Holden Meehan, the independent financial adviser, looks favourably on portfolio funds. "They provide a mini-stockbroker service," says Mark Dear. "You would otherwise need £100,000 to get a sensible spread of investments. If you have got £100,000 or more then you can go for a personalised Rolls-Royce service. If not, then these funds are very useful."

Graham Hooper of Chase de Vere recommends approaching these funds with a balanced overview. "It is not a good idea to put all your money in one fund. Every fund goes through its good and bad times. A sensible approach would be to invest in two or three funds of this type."

"These funds are re-packaged unit trusts," he says. "If you are not following the markets from day to day, then portfolio funds provide bona fide quality management at a reasonable price. You also get the merchant banks' asset alloca-

tion, which it is difficult to get hold of otherwise. It is one-stop shopping for the investor."

For example, the MAM portfolio is invested in over 180 different stocks. Even if you could identify the portfolio yourself, which is highly unlikely, dealing charges would go through the roof. The portfolio funds' size means dealing charges are relatively cheap.

Portfolio funds can be a good idea for the big money, as well as the smaller investor. As the investments are in unit trust form, there is no exposure to capital gains tax when moving stocks. MAM has one client with more than £2m invested in its Portfolio Fund.

The main players

Fund	Min investment (£)
Friends Provident	10,000
HTR	25,000
Mercury Asset Management	10,000
Morgan Grenfell	25,000
Rothschild Asset Management	10,000

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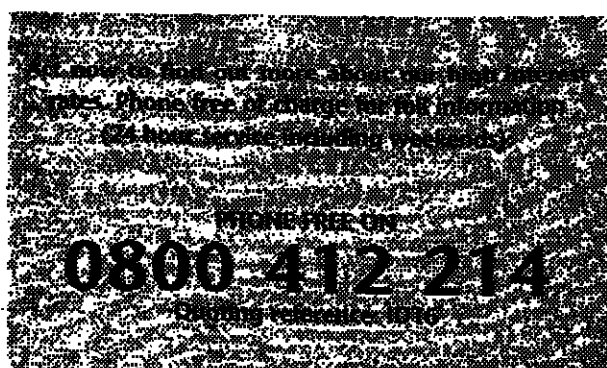
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صلى الله عليه وسلم

For richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health

Justin Urquhart-Stewart continues his series on financial planning at various stages of life with a trip down the aisle

The strains of the church organ are still echoing while you look at the recently arrived photographs of the wonderful day. Only then do you remember just how much you spent on the glorious occasion. Oh boundless joy! Oh financial rupture! But don't worry.

The good news is that from now on you will be pooling your resources as well as your costs.

For many this will have occurred when moving in together. But the key element that is often overlooked is marriage is a change of legal status. The new partnership is a legal entity and as such gives each of you generally equal rights over your assets and liabilities.

The two of you have reached one of the most important moments of your lives. What you lay down as foundations together now will affect your future - as the vicar said "for richer or poorer".

Few of us have the gift of foresight. But we can consider what we want to achieve and planning is essential. There is absolutely no need to rush out and cover yourselves in fashionable financial products. These will only soak up cash when you need it most and probably won't give you the future flexibility you require.

So sit down and contemplate your alternatives together. You need to consider a number of areas. First, how are you going to build your careers? The guaranteed job for life no longer exists. You may be working full-time, part-time or on limited contracts but what you want to do with your careers impacts on the type of financial arrangements that you need to make.

Will you have children at some stage? Maybe not yet, maybe never. My doctor once advised me to consider this carefully. "A child or a Ferrari," he said, "both require as much love and attention and cost about the same to run." Financially, there is never a good time to start a family. But you can make preparations.

What are your housing needs? These days this tends to be governed by our work - and gone are the days of a guaranteed profit on the sale of property. While you will want a home for yourselves there are alternatives to buying. Buying a property encumbers you with the costs of maintenance of both the mortgage and the building itself. Renting may be more flexible until your plans become more certain.

When do you want to retire? Yes it may be years away. But these days early retirement is not unusual. If you want a comfortable retirement then start acting now.

Key points

Review pension arrangements. Look at their value, performance and flexibility. It is important that you benefit from each other's pension contributions. But don't overdo it at this stage. It reduces flexibility.

Think about a regular monthly investment into a unit or investment trust plan. You can shelter it in a PEP to avoid paying tax.

Change your tax coding and claim married income allowances. Put investments in the name of the lower taxpayer.

Make sure you are properly insured. But watch out for the terms and charges on life and critical illness insurance that is sold as part of a mortgage.

So what action should you take?

First, review your pension arrangements. You both may already have pensions - either private or occupational. Look at their value, performance and flexibility. It is important that you benefit from each other's pension contributions. You will need to tell the pension managers anyway of your change of status so ask them, at the same time, for their proposals. But shop around before acting.

Don't go pension-mad, though. While they are an excellent means of tax-free savings, they are inflexible. Once in, your money is locked up until your retirement.

Still, pensions can be helpful before retirement. They can provide insurance provision for your partner and the tax-free lump when you retire can also be used to pay off the mortgage.

Think about savings and investment. We rarely get lump sums to invest so the only way for any of us to build savings is by putting aside a modest amount every month. Hopefully you will have already started.

Always keep a reserve for those financial gusts that hit us every so often. But also think about starting a regular monthly investment into a unit or investment trust plan. These are low-cost and can give a good spread of investments to minimise risk. They can generate income, which is best reinvested, so that you can watch your nest egg accumulate.

You can shelter this nest egg in a personal equity plan to avoid paying tax on either income or capital growth. This can be a good medium-

term investment fund to which you can add for future uses - like education costs (particularly bearing in mind the cost of university education).

Make sure the Inland Revenue knows about your change in tax status. I suspect a significant proportion of the £500m they are trying to give back comes from us not telling them of our changes of position. Change your tax coding and claim your married income allowances.

Do remember to use your tax limits and exemptions. Put any investment in the name of the partner who pays the least tax. Your PEP and Tessa allowances are doubled between you, but you will probably have more short-term claims on your cash for the moment.

Make sure you are properly insured. It is a sensible way of helping your partner and protecting the value of your assets. Life and critical illness insurance is designed to help you or your partner to cover large debts, like the mortgage, if either of you dies or becomes critically ill.

Quite often mortgage providers make it a condition that you have this type of protection - but watch out for the terms you are offered and the charges.

Household and other asset insurance doesn't do much for you - until disaster occurs. Maybe when you were single this was not such an issue, but now that you have a responsibility for your partner must act accordingly.

Make a will. Possibly the last thing you want to think about after your marriage is your death. However just speak to any widow and she will tell you the difficulty of having to deal with the estate of a husband who didn't leave a will. It takes little effort or cost but makes you consider what should happen.

We never seem to have enough money when we need it most but by investing time in laying some solid foundations now, you will avoid a lot of financial grief later. There will be many more complications over the next few years, which you won't be able to predict. The main rule of financial planning at this stage is to keep it simple, keep it low-risk and keep it flexible.

Don't over-commit yourselves now, you will only have to unpick it later. And whatever you do, remember to leave adequate money aside for having some fun. Remember you married your partner - not your bank statement!

The author is Business Development Director at Barclays Stockbrokers.



Getting hitched: time to lay some solid foundations - but make sure you are properly insured

Photograph: Hulton Deutsch

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On a wing and a prayer

Investing in an ostrich can bring a return of 785%. By Frances Howell

Fed up with receiving apologetic notes from his stockbroker about the state of the market, the writer Duff Hart Davis bought an ostrich. "I paid £3,500 for an 18-month-old hen, which should start laying eggs next year, and for the next 30 years," he explains. "The returns should go up to 100 per cent a year and, as a seven or eight-year-old mature breeding hen, she should be worth about £10,000."

Better than a punt on the Football?

Ostrich farming is increasingly common in the UK, with up to 200 farms now supporting up to 500 birds each. It is a rare opportunity for the private investor to dabble in farming. Nobody, for example, preaches the virtues of the humble cow as an investment vehicle.

The Ostrich Farming Corporation advertises annual returns of anything up to 785 per cent over a 10-year period, which may tempt even the most urban of investors. However, to the wary, these promises will appear as exotic as the bird.

You can buy ostrich hens at various stages of their 25-year commercial breeding cycle. Prices range from £6,000 for a two- to three-year-old hen in her first year

of breeding to £14,000 for an eight-year-old in her fifth year. The return on investment comes mainly from the sale of the chicks, which the OFC will buy from you once they are 12 months old. If you do invest, the OFC offers a variety of five-year deals in which it will buy a fixed number of chicks each year for a guaranteed £500 each. After the five years it will still buy the chicks, but at market-determined prices.

In the case of a £6,000 bird, for example, the OFC deal promises to buy five chicks in her first year and two, nine chicks in year three and 12 chicks in years four and five. So in year two you get £2,500. You get another £2,500 in year three, £4,500 in year four and £6,000 in year five. Total return: £15,500 on a £6,000 investment over five years.

The OFC will also buy the 12 chicks produced in breeding year five, but not at the guaranteed price of £500. Any spare chicks disappear in livery charges. A mature eight-year-old breeding hen costs £14,000 and is guaranteed to produce 20 chicks in the first three years (£10,000 in years two, three and four) and 24 chicks in years four and five (£12,000 in year five). Total return £42,500.

The Ostrich Farming Corporation makes its money on any eggs produced over and above the figures guaranteed for that age of bird. In exchange, it provides livery for free, and will immediately replace for free any hen whose performance isn't up to the mark. However, ownership of the bird rests wholly with the purchaser. The payment of excess eggs to the OFC forms part of separate livery agreement. So, there is money to be made — at the moment. However, the high profits made so far rely partly on the scarcity of the birds. With each hen producing an average of 10-12 young females a year, the industry view is that saturation point for breeder hens is about 5 years away.

And 5 years is the length of time for which the OFC guarantees to pay £500 for each 12-month-old chick. It claims that breeder hens will keep their value as they will supply a world-wide meat market. But there must be a real risk that their currently exaggerated value will slide. Indelicate as it may be, the bottom line of Ostrich farming is the value of the carcass. At present a 12-year-old is worth up to £1,000. But as the market expands, this will halve.

The original ostrich farming boom of the nineteenth century relied on a high demand for ostrich feathers. However, the fashion changed, and the bottom fell out of the market. Is the current revival also riding a wave of fashion and fad? This time, ostrich hide is being turned into purses, briefcases, and even jeans. But the main market is seen as the future meat market.

Ostrich meat is a low cholesterol fat-free red meat which apparently tastes like fillet steak, but currently costs about 30 per cent more. "To supply 10 per cent of the existing beef market in the UK would require a minimum of 100,000 breeder hens," says Brian Ketchell, managing director of the Ostrich Farming Corporation. "Even a tiny percentage of the existing meat market would mean a huge market for ostrich."

Despite its popularity in countries like Australia, ostrich is rarely on the menu in Europe, and to this extent, talk of a future meat market is speculative.

Before you buy an ostrich

Owning an ostrich is not covered by the 1986 Financial Services Act because of the legal structure of the ownership and livery agreements. If the market were to collapse and the company to go into liquidation, guaranteed returns could be worthless.

Owning an ostrich as an investment is farming. Income depends on produce and the market price for it. Remember that guaranteed returns are based on the current state of what is still a developing market for both breeder hens and for meat.

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"Most people learn their lessons about the realities of economic life and investment not in the classroom, but through bitter experience"

A fool and his money, as we all know, are soon parted. But is it the case that the British are more credulous and more naive about money than other nations? There are, alas, plenty of grounds for believing we may be. (Before they write in, I accept Scottish readers may rightly object to being tarred with the Sassenach brush in this respect.)

On the face of it, such a statement seems odd. After all, have not the 1980s been an exceptionally good decade for those with the talent and drive to create wealth? According to a survey published last week, the number of those with serious money has risen sharply. The market research firm Datamonitor reckons there are now 49,000 millionaires in the country, nearly three times the number less than a decade ago. More than 20,000 Britons now earn over £200,000 a year.

But historians looking back on the late 1980s and early 1990s will surely also notice the large numbers of those who lost money. These, after all, have been the years of negative equity, of the personal pensions fiasco, of the endless disasters at Lloyd's of London and several notorious financial scandals, such as Barlow Clowes and BCCI.

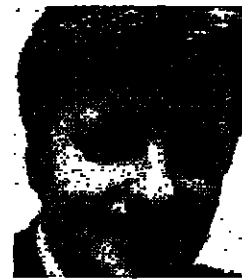
Making money may never have been

easier, but nor, so it seems, has losing it. It is scant comfort that several of the sufferers, like those who ran Barings, or the banks and insurance companies who frittered away millions buying absurdly over-priced estate agents at the top of the housing market, clearly should have known better.

For the rest, including thousands of ordinary, outwardly sensible middle class folk who have never knowingly taken a huge amount of risk, a mixture of innocence, gullibility and ignorance has taken a heavy toll in the last few years. These are the people who gave their money to Barlow Clowes and to Lloyd's.

They are the elderly couples who were sweet-talked into mortgaging their homes to buy home income plans that could never have met their stated investment objectives. And they are the thousands of people who plunged savings into illiquid endowment policies they clearly did not understand and who bought personal pensions at a cost in commissions and charges that would have horrified them had they fully understood them.

Some of these cases are described in a new book, *Fool's Gold*, which graphically underlines how painful the consequences of such financial folly can be. The author,



JONATHAN DAVIS INVESTMENTS

Jonathan Mantle, who chronicle the disasters at Lloyd's in his last book, paints a convincing picture of how easily normally sensible people can slip into folly when it comes to making financial decisions.

What is striking, reading these painful case histories, is not just the terrifying ignorance amongst even well-educated people about the most basic financial concepts, but how in so many cases this ignorance is fatally compounded by a very English fault: misplaced trust and exaggerated respect for badges of authority and respectability.

"Of course I had no fears about it," says

one of the ludicrously undercapitalised names lured into Lloyd's in the late 1980s, "because we were talking about Lloyd's of London. It had a wonderful reputation". Almost as bizarre are those investors who believed that because Barlow Clowes said it was investing in gilts, their investment was somehow underwritten by the Government.

The interesting question, of course, is what can be done to minimise this kind of folly in future. Inevitably, some will say the answer lies in yet more regulation. Nobody can doubt that the system of financial services regulation in this country is an uneasy mixture of self-regulation and inconsistent and frequently ineffective statutory powers.

But, as in most other spheres of activity, calling for more regulation is the easy way out that solves little. All too often, regulation is expensive and ineffective at achieving its stated objectives - often because the regulators are in the pocket of those they are trying to regulate. It is a pity, for example, that it has taken years for the Government to summon up the courage to insist on disclosure of charges and commissions in the life insurance industry.

In the end, there is only one enduring

way to eliminate financial folly, and that is through creating a nation that is better educated in financial matters. Compulsory disclosure of relevant information by anyone selling financial "products" must be the starting point, but that alone can never be enough.

The education system in this country is also sorely deficient. Most people learn their lessons about the realities of economic life and investment not in the classroom, but through bitter experience. Lucky the person who has a financially astute parent. There must be a place in the schools curriculum, and in higher education, for the teaching of basic financial and business concepts.

There is nothing new about greed, innocence or misplaced trust. Nor is there anything startlingly new about the notion that reward is linked to risk, that the business cycle will never be abolished, and that sound independent financial advice has to be paid for (something the English are notoriously reluctant to do). Yet as long as these basic lessons have to be learnt, the financial follies of the 1980s will come round again. That at least you can safely bet your life savings on.

Fool's Gold, by Jonathan Mantle: Sinclair-Stevenson. £17.99

Where to move your money when savings rates fall

There are rewarding alternatives to building societies. By Brian Tora

Bank and building society deposits are still the most popular way of saving money. So when interest rates come down there can be real hardship for millions of people. The tragedy is, the pain can be avoided.

As mortgage lending becomes ever more competitive, building societies are trimming their rates. It is the short-notice deposits that are bearing the brunt of the rate cuts announced recently - with around 0.5 per cent on average being lopped off.

It is possible to secure higher returns by agreeing to fix the amount you leave on deposit for a longer period, but it reduces flexibility. Typically, a building society taking money for, say, one year, will exact a penalty equivalent to three months' interest if you need the money early.

For those able to lock cash away, though, the additional interest can be useful. The Halifax building society, for example, will offer 6.9 per cent gross for sums of £10,000 or more fixed for

a period of one year, compared with 4.35 per cent gross available from the ordinary share account.

Another way of fixing your return is to buy UK government securities. Gilt-edged stock, or gilts, as these are known, are the promissory notes issued by the Government to fund public spending. Gilts are flexible but they do carry some risk. Unlike fixed-term building society deposits, you can buy and sell them in the stock market.

The price will fluctuate according to prevailing interest rates. If interest rates go up, the price of gilts will fall, raising the return to buyers. Conversely, if interest rates fall, you make a capital profit. The shorter the life of a gilt (most gilts have a fixed redemption date) the less the risk of volatile movements. At present, for example, you can get 8 per cent gross from 8 per cent Treasury 2002/06.

Alternatively you can consider guaranteed income bonds. These are issued by insurance companies and can be bought for 52p, will give you

your money up for a period of time. Among the highest yielding guaranteed income bonds at present are those offered by AIG, where the yields range from 6.1 per cent net of basic rate tax to 6.35 per cent for a five-year term, depending whether you deposit £10,000 or £50,000.

Then there are investment trust dividend preference shares. These also offer a predictable return (assuming the assets are sufficiently valuable) and have the advantage that they are tradable on the stockmarket. But like gilts they fluctuate in value according to prevailing interest rates.

Get professional advice. A high yield on a zero-dividend preference could mean that there is some doubt over the final redemption value. However, they are a share so any profit you make is treated as a capital gain, not income.

Currently the Fleming Income & Capital Zero Dividend Preference, which you can buy for 52p, will give you

a gross yield of 8 per cent over the period to when they are redeemed in 2002 at a predicted 85.2p a share.

Putting money in any of these could prove a wise investment decision - if interest rates continue to fall. But interest rates do not move in a straight line.

Remember that short term rates have been as high as 15 per cent in this country recently, a level that would devastate the value of many of these investments.



Building societies: popular, but rates are being trimmed

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Your questions
answered by a
panel from Coopers
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QUESTION & TIME

I borrowed £6,000 over eight years from the Associate Mortgage Corporation. At that time I paid an additional premium of £560 to protect against redundancy and sickness, but did not receive a copy of the policy.

I subsequently became ill and was retired on medical grounds. But when I tried to make a claim I was told the policy had expired as it was only taken out for five years.

I would have thought that a five-year protection policy on an eight-year loan would amount to an unfair clause. Please can you advise.

Redundancy or sickness cover can be taken out for a specified time scale of your own choosing. The premium charged reflects the level of risk and the duration of the cover provided.

In this instance I agree that having the cover for only five years when your liability was for longer does not make sense.

However, it is not impossible for this situation to have arisen.

It could well have been a genuine mistake by the Associate Mortgage Corporation's representative. But when you agreed to the premium of £560 you should have had sight of the contract and it should have shown that the expiry date was after five years.

You should write to the Associate Mortgage Corporation and ask it to review its files, looking at the original meeting notes to see whether there was any indication at the time the policy was to be for eight years.

However, as the policy has now lapsed and as it was

some time ago it is unlikely they will still have them. If there is nothing in writing, I am afraid it is very much down to your word against theirs.

This kind of error emphasises the need to read in detail any contract before signing it and I would recommend you keep copies of policy schedules to enable you to check policy cover at a later date if necessary.

I have a Tessa that I took out nearly five years ago and is due to mature early next year. Can I reinvest all the proceeds in a new Tessa?

Tax Exempt Special Savings Accounts (Tessas) first became available in January 1991 so the first accounts will be maturing next January.

The rules allow you to roll over the capital you invested in the first Tessa, up to a maximum of £9,000, into a new Tessa.

However, you cannot roll over the interest as well so you will have to find an alternative home for this.

Other than this the same rules apply to the new Tessa as the old one, that is a maximum of £9,000 capital invested over 5 years. You can only hold one Tessa at a time.

Readers should send their questions regarding financial and investment matters to our panel of experts at Question Time, Personal Finance Department, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

We cannot guarantee to answer all readers' questions but they will be sent to Coopers & Lybrand and a representative selection will appear in Money each week.

Best borrowing rates

MORTGAGES	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive
Fixed rates					
Hinckley & Rugby BS	0800 774499	0.75 to 1/10/96	70	£250	—
Coventry BS	0800 126125	4.75 to 1/1/98	85	£250	—
Lambeth BS	0800 225221	6.65 to 1/5/98	95	£250	0.5% cashback—£750
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	6.74 to 1/1/99	95	£250	—
Britannia BS	01249 655971	7.24 for 5 years	95	£300	—
TSB	Local branch	8.54 to 30/6/05	95	£250	Free valuation
Variable rates					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	1.79 for 1 year	95	—	£150 cashback
Halifax BS	0800 834625	4.99 to 30/11/97	90	—	Free val, £250 cashback
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.59 to 1/1/99	95	—	Free valuation
National Counties BS	01372 739702	6.49 for 5 years	70	—	—

PERSONAL LOANS	Telephone	APR	Fixed monthly payments £3,000 for 3 years	Without insurance
Unsecured				
Midland Bank	Local branch	15.40	£116.54	£103.14
N&P BS	0800 808080	15.50	£118.22	£103.29
Yorkshire Bank	0113 231 5324	15.50	£119.34	£103.34
Secured				
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.80	95	Max term
Royal B of Scotland	0800 121121	10.10	70	2 to 25 years
First Direct	0800 242424	10.30	80	3 years—retirement Up to 40 years

TYPICAL OVERDRAFTS	Telephone	Authorised EAR %	Unauthorised EAR %
Barclays Bank	Local Branch	19.20	29.80
Lloyds Bank	Local Branch	19.40	26.80
Nat West Bank	Local Branch	18.90	33.25

BEST OVERDRAFTS	Telephone	Authorised EAR %	Unauthorised EAR %
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	9.50	29.50
Alliance & Leicester	0500 959595	9.50	29.80
Abbey National	0500 200500	9.90	29.50

CREDIT CARDS	Telephone	Card	Min income	Rate pm %	APR %	Annual fee
Standard						
R Fleming (S&P)	0800 282101	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.98	12.40	—
Royal B of Scotland	0800 161616	MasterCard	—	1.14	14.50	—
TSB	Local branch	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.38	17.90	—
Gold cards						
Lloyds Bank	Local branch	MasterCard	£20,000	1.15	16.50	£40
Midland Bank	Local branch	Visa	£20,000	1.30	18.10	£35
MBNA International	0800 062620	MasterCard/Visa	£20,000	1.45	18.90	—

STORE CARDS	Telephone	Payment by direct debit % pm	Other methods % pm	APR
John Lewis	Local store	—	1.39	18.00
Marks and Spencer	01244 681881	1.90	2.00	26.80
Burtons Option	Local store	1.97	2.21	29.90

APR... Annualised percentage rate. EAR... effective annual rate.
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Best savings rates

Telephone Number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access Acc	Instant	£100	5.00
C&G	0171 283 0010	London Account	Postal	£2,500	5.95
Leeds & Holbeck	0113 2438292	Albion Investment	Postal	£10,000	6.40
Leeds & Holbeck	0113 2438292	Albion Investment	Postal	£25,000	6.70

NOTICE ACCOUNTS					
Bradford & Bingley	0345 248248	Direct 60	60 day P	£5,000	6.70
Bradford & Bingley	0345 248248	Direct 60	60 day P	£15,000	7.15
National Counties	01372 742211	90 Second Issue	90 day	£10,000	6.80
National Counties	01372 742211	90 Second Issue	90 day	£20,000	7.10

TERM ACCOUNTS					
Portman BS	01202 292444	One Yr Interest Bd	1 year	£500	6.50F
Norwich & P'boro	01733 371371	1 Yr Fxd Rte Bond	1 year	£5,000	6.65F
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	2 Yr Fxd Rte Bond	2 year	£500	6.90F
Norwich & P'boro	01733 391497	5 Yr Fxd Rte Bond	5 year	£10,000	7.75 F

MONTHLY INTEREST					
Bath Investments BS	01225 423271	Monthly Income	Postal	£1,000	4.36
Britannia BS	01538 392808	Capital Trust	Postal	£2,000	5.84
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Current Acc Gold	Postal	£10,000	6.08
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Current Acc Gold	Postal	£25,000	6.31

TESSAS (tax-exempt special savings accounts)					
Market Harborough	01858 463244	5 year	£9,000	7.75	Year
N&P BS	01274 739444	5 year	£9,000	7.50 F	Year
Sun Banking	01438 744500	5 year	£8,575	7.50 F	Year
National Counties	01372 742211	5 year	£3,000	7.40	Year

HIGH-INTEREST CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	Instant	£500	3.20
Halifax BS	01422 833333	Asset Reserve	Instant	£5,000	4.50
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£2,500	5.50
Northern Rock BS	0500 505000	Current Acc Gold	Postal	£50,000	6.50

OFFSHORE (gross)					
Portman CI	01481 822747	Instant Gold	Instant	£5,000	6.20
Alliance & L IOM	01824 663566	Mandatum	Instant	£25,000	6.65
Newcastle GIB	00 350 76168	Nova 90 O'shore	90 day	£50,000	7.25
Portman CI	01481 822747	Gold Bond Acc	3 year	£5,000	7.75 F

NATIONAL SAVINGS Accounts & bonds (gross)					
Investment Accounts		1 month	£20	5.25	Year
			£500	5.75	Year
			£25,000	6.00	Year
Income Bonds		3 month	£2,000	6.50	Month
			£25,000	6.75	Month
Capital Bonds		Series 1	5 year	£100	7.75 F
First Option Bonds			12 month	£1,000	6.40 F
				£20,000	6.80 F
Pensioner's G'ted Income Bond		Series 2	5 year	£500	7.50 F
NS Certificates (tax-free)					
42nd issue		5 year	£100	5.85 F	Maturity
8th index linked		5 year	£100	3.00+RP1	Maturity
Children's Bond		Issue G	5 year	£25	7.85 F

All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.
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At Mortgages Direct we believe in keeping down the cost of your mortgage. We offer a genuine long term low cost mortgage with a rate of 6.95% (APR 7.2% variable). This means that based on today's rates you could make a total saving of over £10,000 on a mortgage of £80,000 taken over 25 years*. What's more, we'll always try to ensure that it remains at a competitive rate throughout the whole of its life. Once your mortgage is complete, we won't charge you any additional penalty should you decide to leave. To apply for your mortgage or just to find out more, call us now and see how much you could save.

*For this example the typical standard mortgage rate used is that of Bradford & Bingley Building Society as at 7th September 1995. Savings based on a bonus purchase loan of £80,000 taken on an interest only basis over a term of 25 years. Rate assumed: 2.69% in first year (5.3% discount) and 7.99% for the remainder of the term. Savings are based on current rates available from any branch of Bradford & Bingley and are variable.

The Mortgages Direct offer is not available to existing Bradford & Bingley borrowers who are not moving home. For applications through the Society's Mortgage Direct service, the loan must not exceed 75% of the purchase price/valuation (whichever is the lower).

TYPICAL EXAMPLE: A mortgage of £80,000 completed on September 30th taken out on an "Interest Only" basis, with one capital repayment of £80,000 being made at the end of the term, over 25 years on a purchase price of £80,000 would result, an APR of 7.2% (variable). Gross monthly interest only mortgage repayments of £381.44 during the mortgage term. Total amount payable £116,459.55 includes the mortgage advance of £80,000, £17.90 solicitor's fees (these fees are not applicable to mortgages in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Consumers there should contact their local solicitor for details). Scaling Fee of £50.00 and accrued interest of £265.51 for the period September 30th to September 30th. In this example, a valuation fee of £145.00 would be payable on application and refunded on completion of the mortgage. Example assumes an interest rate of 6.95% during the first year and this rate applies throughout the term of the loan. This rate is variable and the rate at any point during the loan term may differ from that used in this calculation. A Mortgage Guarantee charge is not payable for this example. Rates quoted are variable, so therefore is the APR. Loans subject to status and valuation. Mortgage security is required. Written quotations are available on request by writing to Bradford & Bingley Building Society, Main Street, Bingley, West Yorkshire BD16 2JW. Mortgages are only available to persons aged 18 or over.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

Bradford & Bingley Building Society is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority for investment business. Head Office, PO Box 88, Crossflats, Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 2JW.

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The value of shares and the income from them can fall as well as rise and you may not get back the full amount invested. Past performance is no guide to the future. All figures to 31 December 1995 figure to 30/6/95. *Base net rate to 1962—source EGW. Thereafter highest net rate available from Microcap (£25,000+ Account), based on total return, net income reinvested. *Source Foreign & Colonial Management Ltd using mid-market prices, net income reinvested, incl. historical 3.5% notional expenses. Plan charges 0.2% commission and 0.5% Gov. stamp duty. Foreign & Colonial Management Ltd (regulated by IMRO and the Personal Investment Authority) or its subsidiaries are the Managers of the Investment trusts.

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staying in

THE WEEK AHEAD

MONDAY

television
by Louise Levene

radio
by Robert Hanks

Cutting Edge: Fighting for Breath 9pm C4. Asthma kills 1,800 people a year but awareness remains low and treatments unsatisfactory (3996).
Omnibus: Gore Vidal's Gore Vidal 10.40pm BBC1 (above). The first of a two-part film about the 70-year-old writer (559489).
Film: Lancer Spy (Gregory Ratoff 1937 US).
1.55am C4. George Sanders uses his aristocratic manner and fluent German in a tale of a British naval officer who doubles for a dastardly Hun (558855).

Morning collection with Paul Gambaccini 9am R3. Radio 3's frustrating slide into poorly-managed populism continues with the recruitment of Classic FM's chart guru for a primetime slot, and the shifting of *Composer of the Week* to lunchtimes.

TUESDAY

The Avengers. 8pm C4 (above). Forget the page-boy posturing of Joanna Lumley and Gareth Hunt. Channel 4 has the genuine article - Miss Emma Peel and her bitch-queen wardrobe (12823).
Film: Howards End (James Ivory 1992 UK) 9pm C4. Emma Thompson and Anthony Hopkins star in this painstaking Merchant Ivory recreation of E.M. Forster's Edwardian drama of sex, money and class. With Helena Bonham Carter, Vanessa Redgrave and Samuel West (50001045).

They Called Me Al 9pm R2. The sad tale of Al Bowlly, "the British Bing Crosby" (he was actually of Greek-Labenean extraction). He never broke America and throat problems checked his career, but he's achieved a sort of glory through Dennis Potter's TV dramas.

Della Smith's Winter Collection 8pm BBC2. Egg-poaching painstakingly explained. Della's latest money-spinner begins with a look at winter salads. Retailers should prepare to stock up on cranberries, Camembert and rocket (2343).
People's Century 9.30pm BBC1 (above). The growing importance of sport and leisure led to the mass construction of stadiums that would comfortably seat the new enthusiasts and promote national solidarity (627527).

WEDNESDAY

Jake's Progress 9pm C4. Alan Bleasdale's latest tale of a Nineties family of three with a breadwinning mother, a house husband and a confused little boy whose spiralling financial difficulties drive them to the edge. Robert Lindsay and Julie Walters star in this six-part drama (5106525).
Layton Orient: Yours For a Fiver 10.40pm C4 (above). Barry Hearn bought the loss-making club for the price of five lottery tickets. Here's what happened last season (6151657).

First Impressions 6.30pm R4. Deeply so-so new panel game for impressionists - a neat format but, on the pilot tape at least, most of the pleasure comes from guessing who on earth the tiny impressions are supposed to represent.

Garden Doctors 8pm C4 (3435) and Geoff Hamilton's Cottage Garden 8pm BBC2 (2139) clash horribly; a spiteful move on BBC2's part that has led to spot-battered VCRs up and down the country. This week Dan Pearson helps a single mother turn her council estate backyard into a wild west corral. Heroes of Godey 9pm C4 (above). A new series of clips and chat begins with the usual food remembrances of Tommy Cooper (5757663).

THURSDAY

Classic Serial: Uncle Slas 2pm R4. Sheridan Le Fanu's masterly Victorian shocker, about the poor young heiress and the wicked uncle in sheep's clothing, dramatised in three parts. Graham Crowden plays the ailing father, George Cole his nasty brother.

SUNDAY TELEVISION AND RADIO

BBC1

7.25 Steven Spielberg's Amazing Stories (S) (5634595).
8.15 The Good Book Guide (S) (6057750).
8.30 Breakfast with Frost (81682).
9.30 First Light (S) (54582).
10.00 See Hear (S) (76953).
10.30 Suenos - World Spanish (S) (1533798).
10.45 This Multimedia Business (S) (1521953).
11.00 The 11th Hour (S) (20868).
12.00 Countryfile (S) (16934).
12.30 News on the Record. With Michael Heseltine (Then The Nation's Favourite Poems) (23601).
1.30 EastEnders (R) (S) (6109953).
2.55 Columbo (R) (4469048).
4.05 Cartoon (9879359).
4.15 Junior Masterchef (S) (499953).
4.45 The Clothes Show. The three-quarter length coat must have an agent. There's no other explanation (S) (2715514).
5.10 Lifetime (S) (9974934).
5.20 The Great Antiques Hunt. Ignorant contestants (1750) were described as Early Victorian last week are held in check by sartorially-challenged Jilly Gooldeen (S) (3478088).
6.00 News: Weather (250205).
6.20 Regional News (206917).
6.25 Songs of Praise (S) (236972).
7.00 Last of the Summer Wine (S) (2750).
7.30 Challenge Anneka. Anneka houses 10 homeless families (S) (879563).
8.20 Hotshots. Reef sharks (R) (S) (42514).
8.30 Keeping Up Appearances. Then The Nation's Favourite Poems (S) (7205).
9.00 Pride and Prejudice. Mr Collins bears his rejection with fortitude, Bingley is whisked out of harm's way and Elizabeth goes to Rosings (S) (577446).
9.55 News: Weather (606514).
10.10 The Frank Skinner Show (S) (953069).
10.40 Everyman. An unemployed George gives four moralists a tour of yob culture (Followed by The Nation's Favourite Poems) (S) (70972).
11.30 Gentle by bloodless drama about a downed US pilot taken to a remote North Japanese village where he falls for a young widow. With Chris Makepeace (127446). Then Weather. To 1.15am.

REGIONS. Wales: 12.00pm Horneland. 10.10 Wales across the World. 11.00 Frank Skinner. 11.30 Everyman. 12.00 Film: Captive Hearts. 2.00 News. 3.00 Scotland. 5.10pm Lifetime. To 2.55pm Now You're Talking. 5.10 Lifetime from Northern Ireland. 1.10 Inside U.S. News.

BBC2

7.20 Skippy (R) (S) (9306798).
7.45 Playdays (R) (S) (1020175).
8.05 Casper Classics (6064040).
8.20 Mortimer and Arabel (R) (S) (6052205).
8.35 Roald Dahl on Jackson (4914446).
8.50 Balsa (R) (S) (1040040).
9.05 The Animals of Farthing Wood (R) (S) (555427).
9.30 Skeleton Warriors (8725359).
9.55 Travel Bug (8793750).
10.25 Grange Hill (R) (S) (3370021).
10.50 The Little Vampire (S) (5648514).
11.15 Growing Up Wild (S) (5687243).
11.40 Doc Savage: the Man of Bronze (Michael Anderson 1975 US). Kitch comic-book caper starring Ron Ely (64147408).
1.15 The O Zone (S) (28472040).
1.30 Elephants in Thailand. A Thai village where noble pachyderms are trained to schlep logs from one side of the compound to the other (1548088).
2.15 Fall of the Roman Empire (Anthony Mann 1964 US). Sumptuous yawn charting the rise of the barbarians after the death of Marcus Aurelius. With Sophia Loren and Alec Guinness (10985359).
5.10 Rugby Special: Wasps vs Bath (S) (5673717).
5.10 Trials of Life (R) (S) (971040).
7.00 Jeremy Clarkson's Motorworld (R) (S) (6232).
7.30 Timewatch. The Vikings. See Preview, p28 (S) (51408).
8.30 The Money Programme. Was leaving the ERM such a good idea? (301088).
9.10 Cinema Europe - the Other Hollywood. Turns the focus to Sweden. See Preview, p28 (954595).
10.10 American Elements (Christian Pevet 1991 UK). Mr Chips meets Charley's Aunt when a 19th-century Oxford academic falls for a lively American. Mild-mannered comedy with Michael Palin and Connie Booth (801601).
11.45 The Trial of QJ Simpson. Peter Frigate looks back at the week's sensational events (S) (740175).
12.25 Close Up (4657460).
12.35 The Bat Whispers (Roland West 1930 US). Old Dark House curiosity about bats in the belly in a California mansion. Remade from a successful silent version in 1926 and starring Chester Morris (6757118).
2.00 The Learning Zone: FETV Collectables: Wasps (538). 3.25 Making Time. (75538). 4.00 French Experience. 5.00 Italianissimo. (24267). To 6.00am.

REGIONS. Wales: 5.10pm Scrum 5. Scott: 5.10pm Sportsman Rugby Special.

ITV/London

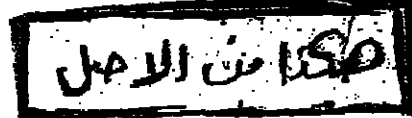
6.00 GMTV 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News and Sport. 7.00 The Sunday Programme. (19953).
8.00 Disney Adventures (S) (3532088).
9.25 Disney Parade (S) (8886868).
10.15 Link. Magazine for the disabled. A Muscular Dystrophy group stoutly defend "Groovy T" day against allegations of bad taste. Sportscasters around the world are said to have taken part in this worthy fundraising event on an anonymous basis (S) (2130446).
10.30 Morning Worship (S) (14953).
11.30 Island Soldiers (S) (3795514).
11.50 Many Questions. With Olivia O'Leary (S) (4440137).
12.30 Coastalk (50866).
1.00 News & Weather (28497359).
1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby. With Michael Portillo on the eve of the Conservative Party Conference in Blackpool. How much does he think Tony Blair will want for his speech-writing services? (S) (3622750).
2.00 Opening Shot. A profile of ultimate Kaos. A contradiction in terms really. Would make a good title for Stephen Hawking's next book (S) (6330).
2.30 The Sunday Match. Endsleigh league action (39637446).
5.10 Murder, She Wrote. Jessica stumbles upon another stiff (S) (1578791).
6.05 Local News, Weather (277972).
6.25 News & Weather (788663).
6.35 Dr Quinlan Medicine Woman (S) (202682).
7.30 Heartbeat. A German arrives in the village. Don't mention the war (S) (48934).
8.30 You've Been Framed (S) (5601).
9.00 London's Burning. A fire at a primary school (S) (7171).
10.00 Hale and Pace. A new series (so somebody out there must quite like them) (S) (42359).
10.30 News & Weather (812601).
10.45 The South Bank Show. Luciano Pavarotti's 60th birthday is celebrated by an interview with Melvyn Bragg and a look at his life, career and influences. See Preview, p28 (S) (715663).
11.45 London Stage 95. Sheridan Morley and guests discuss Ray Cooney's farce *Funny Money*, plus *Dead Funny* at the Savoy (705137).
12.00 Akla. From La Scala, Milan, starring Luciano Pavarotti (42665373).
3.15 Hollywood Round (R) (S) (91373).
3.45 Cue the Music. Tony Slattery and Richard Vranich introduce The Quilnes (108248).
4.45 Coach. Sitcom (6253170).
5.30 News (62267). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

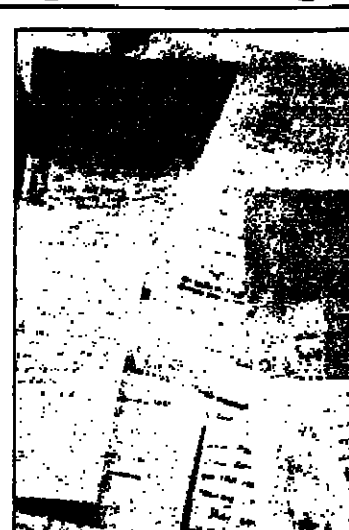
6.05 Blitz (R) (S) (4643446).
7.00 The Herbs (R) (2015917).
7.15 Lift Off (R) (S) (55601).
7.45 The Great Bong (S) (3034311).
8.00 The Babyfishers Club (S) (39885).
8.30 Where on Earth is Carmen Sandiego? (S) (6168779).
8.55 Erosquad (S) (6170514).
9.20 Running the Halls (R) (S) (5661088).
9.45 The Pink Panther Show (S) (6299750).
10.00 Aashli Real Monsters (S) (2115137).
10.15 Masterclass (S) (2138088).
10.30 Rock's Modern Life (R) (S) (1526408).
10.45 Saved by the Bell: The New Class (132021).
11.15 Rowhild (108224).
12.15 Life House on the Prairie (474779).
1.15 The Guinness Pig (Ray Boulting 1948 UK). A young pig wins a scholarship to a posh school in this engaging period piece starring Richard Attenborough, Cecil Trueman, Sheila Sim and Bernard Miles (83046311).
3.00 The Gift Horse (Compton Bennett 1952 UK). Wartime seafaring adventure in which the US gives the navy a cast-off destroyer. With Trevor Howard (13047972).
4.50 Stroke (S) (2071137).
5.05 Time Team. Tony Robinson (him again) goes on a dig at Lambeth Palace (R) (S) (5797750).
6.00 The Persuaders! Slimfit, Stayrest, slingshot, twiddle. This week our medallion duo are on the trail of a bird-shaped statuette (56427).
7.00 Battered Britain. How residents of Heath Town, Wolverhampton are trying to make their world a safer place by installing security cameras, tarring up the public houses and restoring the shopping centre (S) (7175).
8.00 True Blues. Two night-wingers give their views on the future course for the Conservative Party (3595).
9.00 Battered Britain. Roger Grief goes to Meadow Well estate in Newcastle to see what went wrong with community policing there (3359).
10.00 Time After Time (Nicholas Meyer 1979 US). Jack the Ripper steals HG Wells's Time Machine and starts afresh in the serial killing business in modern-day California. Bloodthirsty but diverting shocker starring Malcolm McDowell and David Warner (S) (18019972).
12.05 My English Grandfather (Nana Dzhordzhidze 1986 Rus). An unflappable English telegraph operator on a visit to Georgia stumbles onto the Russian revolution. Beguiling comedy shot in a tasty mixture of sepia and colour (9962267). To 1.20am.

ITV/Regions

As London except: 12.30pm News (50866). 2.00 The Shape of Things (6330). 2.30 News (60555). 3.15 The Road Show (480203). 3.45 Gambia (489576). 4.30 Dr Quinn Medicine Woman (202682). 11.45 News (60555). 12.00 News (60555). 12.30 News (60555). 1.00 News (60555). 1.30 News (60555). 2.00 News (60555). 2.30 News (60555). 3.00 News (60555). 3.30 News (60555). 4.00 News (60555). 4.30 News (60555). 5.00 News (60555). 5.30 News (60555). 6.00 News (60555). 6.30 News (60555). 7.00 News (60555). 7.30 News (60555). 8.00 News (60555). 8.30 News (60555). 9.00 News (60555). 9.30 News (60555). 10.00 News (60555). 10.30 News (60555). 11.00 News (60555). 11.30 News (60555). 12.00 News (60555). 12.30 News (60555). 1.00 News (60555). 1.30 News (60555). 2.00 News (60555). 2.30 News (60555). 3.00 News (60555). 3.30 News (60555). 4.00 News (60555). 4.30 News (60555). 5.00 News (60555). 5.30 News (60555). 6.00 News (60555). 6.30 News (60555). 7.00 News (60555). 7.30 News (60555). 8.00 News (60555). 8.30 News 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the saturday story



Stormy relationship: New Poldark couple Mel Martin and John Bowes (far left), and original stars Angharad Rees and Robin Ellis (left). Letters of protest from the passionate (above)

Photograph: Sam Morgan Moore

The hero with 5,000 passionate lovers

The Poldark novels spawned a hit BBC series. But a new adaptation has angered fans. Marianne Macdonald reports

Tomorrow, about 100 people will file into a hotel in Knightsbridge and hold a lunch inspired by a world which has never existed. This world is a fictionalised version of 17th-century Cornwall, and it is inhabited by impoverished gentlefolk, grasping lawyers, drunken tin miners and overworked physicians. It is, in short, the world of Poldark.

Winston Graham could never have suspected when he began his 11-book Poldark saga in the Forties – after more than 16 previous novels which barely kept him in cigarettes – that he had stumbled onto a plot and a self-character which would create a many millions of devoted readers and spawn a 5,000-member fan club.

The unusual thing about the books was that they combined epic historical drama with good writing and three-dimensional characters, a world away from the cardboard book-busters of today.

Ross Poldark, Graham's mine-owning hero, has everything a man should be: led, dark, scarred, handsome, a gambler, an adventurer, as male as Mr. Farcy or Rhett Butler. There was his frustrated love for Elizabeth, who had jilted him for his cousin, and his struggles with his wife, the former maid-servant Demelza, to be accepted in the high-class circle in which he moved. It was the ultimate fantasy, where women were loved to distraction, where men made and lost fortunes, and where women could rise from rags to riches by marriage.

They were books to fall in love

with, and the outward expression of the strange forces unleashed by Poldark can be seen tomorrow at the annual lunch of the Poldark Appreciation Society. More than a fan club, the society acts as a route to the other, parallel world inhabited by the unglamorous solicitors, tax inspectors, housewives, school teachers and railway workers who are its members.

The society was formed in 1988 by Val Adams, a housewife who lives in Wadebridge, Cornwall. She had read all the Poldark novels in the Sixties and loved them, and enjoyed the BBC adaptations of the early novels screened between 1975 and 1977. When the first series was repeated in 1988, she wondered how many other secret Poldark fans there were. So she wrote a letter to a national newspaper asking for responses. Within days, she had had 300 letters.

The PAS has now been going eight years, and up until recently, has been low-profile. It has swollen to 5,000 members but has never thrown its weight around. Members confine their activities to feeding the Poldark frenzy via the quarterly newsletter and the annual get-together in Cornwall, where they tour the locations for the BBC series, and where they celebrate in style with a ball in full 18th-century regalia.

In the last two months, however, all that has changed. Something has happened which has so struck at the heart of this band of Poldark fanatics throughout 20 countries that the

severest action has been called for and the deepest outrage has been manifest. The catastrophe? The two original stars of the BBC series were dropped from the new adaptation under way from HTV.

Now, this may not sound a particularly big deal on the face of it, but nobody should make the mistake of underestimating the wrath of devoted fans. The outcry was palpable when the BBC decided to take its failing soap opera *Eldorado* off the air, while Radio Four listeners protested violently when *Woman's Hour* was moved to a morning slot.

To understand the fury of the Poldark devotees, one must grasp the fact that Angharad Rees, who played Demelza, and Robin Ellis, who played Ross Poldark in the original BBC series, were much loved. Every weekly episode attracted 15 million viewers. Almost all the men who watched (and there were a lot of them) fell in love with Demelza and almost all the women swooned over the scarred, pony-tailed Ross.

It would be hard to describe the joy of Poldarkians, therefore, when HTV announced that it was planning to adapt the last novels in the saga, kicking off with a two-hour film to run this Christmas to test the water. HTV asked Rees and Ellis to recreate their parts 18 years on (which was appropriate, because there is a 12-year gap in the story) and the actors accepted with delight.

Just as the fans were overjoyed by the choice of Rees and Ellis, so for them it was the offer of a



The appreciation society has promised to boycott the film (by exercising supreme self-discipline and not watching it)

decade. Here was their chance to play the roles which had brought them fame and fortune ("For five minutes I knew what it was like to have been a Beagle," Ellis once recalled) and propel them back into the limelight. For although Ellis had moved on to Shakespeare at Stratford after the first series, his credits for recent years have more notably included voice-overs for Gold Blend coffee.

It all started going dreadfully, horribly wrong, when the actors were told by HTV that despite – they thought – having agreed a fee of £60,000 each to appear in the film, they would actually only be paid £30,000 – exactly, and insultingly, half the original sum.

Ellis was devastated. "I didn't think it was right," he recalls, in a phrase he repeats again and again. "I said to my agent that I wanted to negotiate. But he rang me on Monday and said if I didn't accept the offer by 5pm that evening, they would recast the part." Ellis continued in vain to negotiate. But when he caved in the following week and told his agent to accept £30,000, it was too late. HTV had offered his part to John Bowes.

Rees had also lost her part to Mel Martin, although she had agreed to the lower offer almost immediately. She has now placed the matter in the hands of her solicitor, Robert Storer, who is not forthcoming on the subject. "I've got nothing to say at all," he said yesterday, before putting the phone down.

Filming has now been going on

for some weeks in Bath, Cornwall and London and is due to finish next week, with the adaptation scheduled to be screened over Christmas in Britain – but sold all over the world thereafter.

This unpleasant little episode is read by different people in different ways. One industry insider who has been following the affair says: "They had a tight budget and Ellis was asking for too much money. He's not the only actor who can play that part. There was a certain amount of arrogance." But others argue that Ellis and Rees had earned their fee after the delays and script meetings and have been unfairly treated.

And then there is the Poldark Appreciation Society, which simply believes nobody else can play Demelza and Ross and that HTV is making the biggest mistake of its corporate career.

The thing is, it may be. Val Adams has had more than 7,000 letters complaining about HTV's decision to dump the stars and these, more than anything else, provide an insight into the extraordinarily strong attachment Poldark has created. "I was enthusiastically awaiting the new series of Poldark but my enthusiasm has been thwarted after reading that Angharad and Robin will not now be playing the lead roles. I cannot see any other characters acceptable as Ross and Demelza," wrote Disappointed of Essex. "I was absolutely distraught to read the report in the newspapers regarding HTV's production of

Poldark. I will most certainly not be watching any new production which doesn't have Robin and Angharad," fumed a fan from Scotland. "The news has just filtered across the Atlantic and to say that I'm disappointed, devastated, upset and outraged are just a few adjectives I can find to express my disappointment," scrawled Julie from New York. "If I was not so elderly I would certainly join you in your fight against HTV's treatment of Robin and Angharad," another from Sussex intoned.

The PAS has taken the gloves off over this fight, picketing HTV's offices and even arranging a meeting with Poldark's executive producer, Geraint Morris. It has promised to boycott the HTV film and any successive series (by exercising supreme self-discipline and not watching them). It is fighting as hard as ever to get HTV to "see sense" – although this is looking less and less likely – and Ms Adams is now urging the BBC to screen its original series head-to-head with HTV's.

She says: "I've tried to explain to HTV that for everybody who writes a letter there are 100 people who don't bother, but they just don't get the message. But I haven't given up, and I won't until the film actually goes on screen. I believe this could be similar to Hollywood casting Bette Davis as Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With The Wind*. She was several weeks into the filming before they came to their senses and cast Vivien Leigh. If it can happen in Hollywood, it can happen here."

Jo Brand's week



If I ever get really involuntarily showbiz and shallow, I hope there will always be something to haul me back to earth like there was this week. I did a show in a pub for a friend who was celebrating 25 years of performing. I wanted something a bit unusual so Jeff Green (a comic I tour with) and I agreed to perform 10 minutes of each other's material. It was very strange hearing Jeff opening with the words, "Good evening, I'm Jo Brand," and going on to discuss the merits of panty liners. Likewise, I introduced myself as Jeff Green and talked about interesting ways to impress one's girlfriend sexually. As we were leaving, the barman called Jeff over and asked for his autograph for his niece, who he said was a big fan. Jeff duly signed, although somewhat surprised, as he hadn't done loads of TV. As he walked off the barman shouted, "Goodnight Jo!" I'm in. And there's me thinking I was a bit of a face.

I read an article recently about the dos and don'ts of writing a column, which recommended that one should never discuss one's holiday. Anyway, I was in Rome this week for a short break and we stayed in one of those hotels in which it's quite easy to fantasise that you're in *The Shining*. One night, while four of us were drinking in the bar, we were approached by two strange Italian men who regaled us with stories of all the famous people they had met and generally irritated us until, fed up, we decided to retreat upstairs. I went to collect the room key, which I was informed by the porter, had gone missing. Two hours later the significance of these two incidents hit me. The men were obviously kidnappers or murderers who had somehow got hold of the key and any moment now would burst into the room, kill my dear Jim, and spirit me away to a dark cave outside Rome where they would cut off various bits of me until my family coughed up the dough. By next morning they had not appeared, but the key had. Perhaps I'm eating too much cheese.

Holiday evenings spent in little restaurants imbibing enough booze to reflect the *Titanic* always result in conversations about when the world is going to end. Women tend to go with the argument that people will just blow each other up. Men seem to favour the more pragmatic ecological arguments. One man in our party remarked that the essentials for survival – namely water, oxygen and phosphates – will all run out very soon. I'm afraid I just found myself thinking, "He hasn't even mentioned chocolate yet."

scientists are worried that household appliances could have carcinogenic properties because of something to do with magnetic fields (said she with alarming scientific precision). I wonder whether washing-up, ironing, cooking, scrubbing floors, cleaning the fridge, shopping and getting all those hard bits off the cooker will turn out to be carcinogenic. Just to be on the safe side, I've stopped doing all of them.

Michael Winner in the *Sun* on Wednesday told us all what a lovely man OJ Simpson is. So lovely, in fact, that when he had just started seeing Nicole Brown and was bringing her to meet the winsome Michael, OJ told him, "She's very pretty, but boring. She won't last long." Who saw to that, I wonder?



Hotel television always have an excess of soft porn hidden in them to brighten up even the most miserable business-traveller. One good game you can play, if you are a woman, is to watch the film and like a silent phrase from it. Go down to the dining room the next morning, stand at the door and shout

is there anything that doesn't give you cancer? Now, apparently.

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Blair passes the 1963 test, but what about 1945 and 1979?

For many cynical folk the earth moved this week. Casting around for an alternative to the moribund bunch of politicians who currently govern the country, many will have seen Tony Blair's triumphant "young Britain" speech - and his final rout of old Labour - as providing the answer. If the electorate can be said to have anything as vulgar as a G-spot, then the Sedgefield Sizzler can be relied upon to find it. New Labour is on course for victory at the next election.

Which is where the problems start. In power two things will become rapidly clear to Mr Blair and his colleagues. The first is the limitations on what central government can achieve. For all the wonderful words about ending insecurity and instilling new moral purpose, new Labour will find that the levers marked "change" are not connected to anything. The causes of the new insecurity lie, above all, in the remorseless process of globalisation, over which government enjoys precious little power. Morality has never been something over which governments and politicians have enjoyed - fortunately - much control.

The second, more obvious, problem is that where government can act, easy popularity is rarely available. At Labour's conference the air was thick with zero-sum promises - clever sleights of hand which produced tax revenue or major capital projects out of thin air. Windfall taxes fund unemployment programmes, capital receipts pay for new houses and - most famously - allowing BT into the cable market means all public institutions connect to the information superhighway - gratis, for free! Even if these wheezes were as cost-free as Labour has suggested (and some of

them are not) the rest of the business of government will be far more messy. Most choices will see one priority chosen over another; one set of people advantaged and another losing out.

It follows that any modernising government seeking to take Britain into the new century will find its way littered with pitfalls and diversions. To negotiate these will require a compass that at all times points up the direction which has to be travelled. So, in 1945, a new Labour government set itself the task of creating a social infrastructure appropriate to the post-war world - and largely succeeded. After 1979 Margaret Thatcher recognised the historical exhaustion of the social-democratic state and embarked on the brutal business of clearing the obstacles to British competitiveness. Both administrations were characterised by a ruthlessness in pursuit of their main purposes; a sense of direction that set them apart from the muddling stop-go of other post-war governments.

But what exactly is new Labour's purpose? The key theme of Mr Blair's first year was to modernise the party. This conference ushered in the aim of modernising Britain. In his speech Blair dazzled with some fine phrases and some inspiring themes. The most telling passage was when he conjured up his vision of Britain as "a young country." But it was a fleeting moment rather than an organising principle of his argument. Is this nit-picking in the context of a speech which enthused delegates and journalists alike? Not if the yardstick is whether Blair has a serious programme for modernising the country. Not if the measures are the governments of 1945 and 1979. The "white heat of technology" speech that



Harold Wilson made to the 1963 Labour conference is part of political folklore; the modernising project of his government most certainly is not. Mr Blair needs a distinctive analysis of what is wrong and an overriding sense of direction. He does not yet have either.

We need look no further than the BT deal for an example of new Labour's confusion. In Mr Blair's speech it sounded great and it has subsequently badly wrong-footed the Tories. All of a sudden one of Britain's premier companies was doing good business with Labour - and being endorsed by Lord Tibbitt.

But it isn't great; it's a mistake. Even Mr Blair must have read enough Marx to know that capital tends towards monopoly. Sir Iain Vallance and Lord Tibbitt aren't altruists interested in a deal because they love competition. Their mission is to throttle their competitors, not help our schools. What keeps them honest is a regulatory system that preserves competition. But Labour could not resist the temptation of the big, national gesture. Now, only a few days after the speech, it is becoming clear that there would be a real price to be paid for copying up to BT.

Contrast all this with Gordon Brown's speech on competition policy, delivered last May. In that address the Shadow Chancellor sought to bury once and for all Labour's attachment to intervention. There would be no more picking winners, no more second-guessing the market, he said. Labour conceived government's primary role as setting the rules for a competitive framework. This was good for everyone, he said, because "if a company receives excessive protection from

competitive pressures in the domestic market, it is unlikely to succeed in the global environment". It was a brave speech and a clear departure from previous Labour policy. But now we don't know which is the real new Labour - the one doing big deals with would-be monopolists, or the one adhering strictly to a strategy for maximising competition. It cannot be both.

But this same contradiction, played out in different ways, appeared time and again throughout the Labour conference and peppers the party's policy statements. At one moment Labour embraces the idea of a diversity of schools and the next denies any mechanism by which parents could effectively make use of such diversity. It promises a referendum on reforming the electoral system, yet gives no clue as to whether it thinks that the system should be reformed. The word "pluralism" trips off the lips of party leaders, at the same time as they endorse a blatantly sectarian by-election campaign.

Labour is not alone in this. Political leaders of all stamps are finding it hard to deal with the challenge of the moment - whether to embrace the world of competition, diversity, evolution and localism, or to try to hold on to the vestiges of central power.

It is not too late. Tony Blair's track record suggests a visceral understanding of this dichotomy. But one looks in vain for his Keith's oscar figure - the diamond-hard intellectual who will force the more transient politicians around him to confront the big picture, who will constantly apply the test of rigour and coherence to policy making. The one for whom winning is not all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Irish church in an educated society

From Mr Paul O'Neill

Sir: Mary Kenny (Another View, 4 October) is correct in her observation that, prior to the liberalisation of Vatican-II, the Irish church enjoyed the unquestioned loyalty of her flock. That the average priest "generally observed punctiliously the chastity he so sternly preached" is probably as valid today as it was then, and impossible to qualify in any case.

Adherence to an unnatural vow of chastity can be explained as willful sacrifice in the service of God, or just "part of the job" in a society where the priest held real political power. Most indiscretions would go unreported precisely because the priest lived in mortal fear of sin which could only be absolved by the priest in confession.

The Irish Catholic church, with constitutional backing from the state, perpetuated an insidious climate of fear and retribution created in the Dark Ages. The people were brainwashed to deny their feelings and impulses and live instead in a perpetual cycle of grace and guilt.

Since the Fifties, successive generations of young Irish

people, enjoying access to opportunities previously available only to the wealthy or the clergy, have been educated to question authority and form their own value judgements. Faced with a well-informed public, the church has had to temper its message. It is not, nor ever has been, a "democracy", and by showing the sinner understanding and forgiveness is merely being true to its *raison d'être*.

As a young Irish person, I believe the church is being forced finally to grow up with the rest of society. Ms Kenny, in advocating that it adopt an authoritarian solution to current woes, is merely demonstrating how far removed she is from the teachings of Christ.

PAUL O'NEILL
Beckhamstead, Hertfordshire
5 October

From Mr Philip Ross

Sir: Surely Mary Kenny doesn't believe the crimes of Catholic priests are something new? It is simply a matter of people being no longer afraid to bring them into the open, due to better education and a more just legal system.

As to being a Catholic country in the 17th century, money was received from Spain. We have yet to know how far this continued. A similar example is to be seen in Catholic Poland. "Set up" alongside Protestant Germany.

Yours faithfully,
FRANK ROSS
Great Ayton,
North Yorkshire
4 October

From Mr Desmond Columb

Sir: Around the same time as the election of Pope John Paul II, the Catholic church in Ireland went all soft and liberal. And that, asserts Mary Kenny, is the root cause of its present difficulties.

Before then, she goes on to claim, the Irish church wasn't afraid to deal firmly with its wayward clerics. But isn't it more realistic to believe that prior to the 1970s, the only thing that the church handled firmly was the brush used to sweep its scandals under the carpet?

Yours faithfully,
DESMOND COLUMB
London, NW8
5 October

Verdicts and evidence in murder trials

From Mr Michael Duncan

Sir: Does Trevor Lyons (letter, 5 October) not realise that in Scotland people object to the not proven verdict for the very reasons he believes make it beneficial? This verdict not only frustrates the defendant in not being able to clear his name, but also frustrates the victims in knowing that the guilty man has walked free. They also have to live with the knowledge that the police are unlikely to reopen the case after such a verdict.

In the OJ Simpson case, a verdict of not proven would divide people even further. Those believing him guilty would be angered at him walking free, while those believing him innocent would be angry at the cloud of suspicion over him. This verdict provides no practical or legal solutions to a case of murder. Instead of wondering about the truth of the matter for ever more, we must accept whatever our personal doubts, that he is not guilty of the murders he was accused.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL DUNCAN
London, SW16
6 October

From Mr Martin Raff

Sir: I have read and heard of many analyses of the jury system in the aftermath of the OJ Simpson trial, but there is one important point illustrated by the trial that seems not to have been emphasised. Jurors are rarely equipped to understand or evaluate much of the technical evidence presented. Could the jurors in the Simpson case, for example, be expected to follow the conflicting statistical arguments? And what could they have made of the two experts on EDTA (an anti-coagulant) - one of whom said there was so much EDTA in one of the blood stains that it had to have come from an EDTA-containing blood collection tube, while the other said that there was so little EDTA in the bloodstain in question that his own blood contained more? The extent of the problem was underlined by one of the dismissed jurors who, after hearing weeks of DNA evidence, remarked that she did not find this evidence convincing because she did not think it was illegal to bleed in your own home.

It seems likely that technical evidence will become even more important in trials in the future. If so, it will become increasingly important that those making decisions about guilt or innocence should be competent to evaluate this evidence. There may come a time when professionally trained jurors will be required. The OJ

trial suggests that the time may be now.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN RAFF
MRC Laboratory for Molecular Cell Biology
University College, London
London, NW3
6 October

From Ms Jan Morris

Sir: In his astonishingly licksplastic assessment of the condition of American justice ("Star-spangled banner of justice" 5 October), Gary McDowell says it would be hard to think of another judicial system "where [sic] one would be likely to do better if arrested for a serious crime". I can think of many, namely, all those systems which have abandoned the barbarism of capital punishments.

Yours faithfully,
JAN MORRIS
Llanystumdwy, Gwynedd

From Mr Peter Wotton

Sir: Before his trial, I had never heard of OJ Simpson. During the past year, in conversations with numerous friends and acquaintances, including some in North America, OJ Simpson has not been mentioned, let alone discussed. Is there something wrong with me?

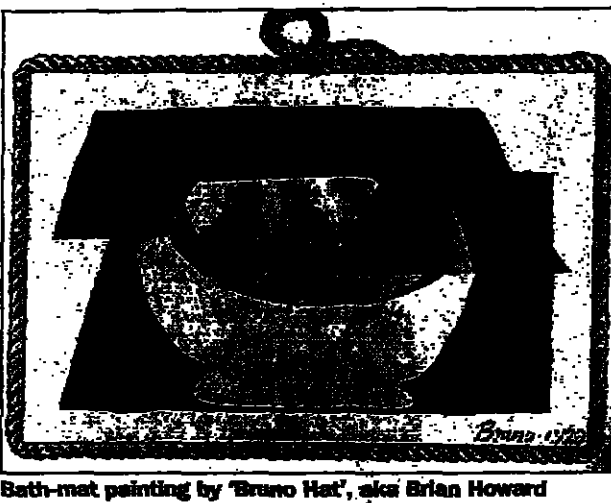
Yours faithfully,
PETER WOTTON
Whiteleaf, Buckinghamshire

The man behind Bruno Hat

From Mrs Marie-Jacqueline Lancaster

Sir: It is Michael Parkin (letter, 4 October) who has got it wrong concerning the correct attribution for "Bruno Hat", not the caption to David Elksdian's book review "The art of lying" (23 September). As my biography *Brian Howard - Portrait of a Failure* (Blond, 1968) recorded, the "Bruno Hat" exhibition was devised by Howard to dupe the newspaper diary columnists of the day. Howard created and painted all the "Bruno Hat" pictures on cork bath mats while his great friend John Banting filed in some of the backgrounds when time was running short and framed the cork mats in rope.

Banting told me, and confirmed in writing, the limit of his responsibilities as above. He was decidedly piqued to think that these Bruno Hat/Brian Howard pastiches could have



Bath-mat painting by 'Bruno Hat', aka Brian Howard

been attributed to him, a known surrealist artist at the time. In a letter to me in the 1960s, Lady Mosley (who, as Diana Guinness, was the hostess at the "Bruno Hat" exhibition party in 1929), wrote that she thought Brian was secretly disappointed at not being hailed by the critics as a great new discovery! John Banting's

work is represented in the Tate and sells for thousands of pounds, whereas Bruno Hat/Brian Howard fakes would only fetch a few hundred pounds for their provenance interest.

Yours,
MARIE-JACQUELINE LANCASTER
London, W8
5 October

Better benefits

From Ms Anna Coote

Sir: Does Tony Blair really want to mean test child benefit (report, 28 September)? The arguments against it are surely too persuasive. Means testing is costly to administer, divisive, helps to trap families in dependency and often misses its targets. Even in better-off families, many women who are not the main earners are short of cash to buy essentials for their children.

But if people really are offended by payments to the wealthy, could we try a different way of tackling this prob-

lem: continue to pay child benefit on a universal basis, but pilot a new scheme that offers recipients the option of assigning their benefit - either to a children's charity or back to the Treasury. It would be relatively simple and cheap, it would encourage altruism and choice, and it would enhance rather than detract from the co-operative spirit of the welfare state.

Yours sincerely,
ANNA COOTE
Deputy Director
Institute for Public Policy Research
London, WC2
28 September

Tell-tale Telecom

From Professor R. A. Birchall

Sir: May I add to the recent discussions on privatised utilities by telling the tale of British Telecom, which recently delivered a new directory at my home. It did this by leaving it on the doorstep, one which is 18 inches from the pavement. I was away for the weekend, so the directory was still on the doorstep at 3am, pointing to the fact that no one was at home. Not surprisingly, I was burgled.

No doubt BT acts in this way to save money but, in doing so, only points up once again the close connections between the desire for maximum profit, lack of concern for the customer and stupidity.

Yours sincerely,
R. A. BIRCHALL
London, N1

No secret deal on French N-tests

From Mr N. G. van der Pas
Sir: Contrary to what Sarah Heim's article suggests ("Secret EU deals over N-test let Paris off the hook" 5 October), there is no secret deal. Unsubstantiated earlier reports in the Danish press have already been formally denied by the European Commission. The latter continues to press France for information. On this basis, it will decide whether action under article 34 of the Euratom Treaty should be taken.

Your correspondent writes of a secret memorandum. But she does not reveal its origins and is rather vague about its contents. The reader is left with the misleading impression that this paper could originate from the European Commission or even contain the "secret deal". On close reading, one understands that it could be any report from diplomatic circles. If it is, the author is wrong.

Yours faithfully,
N. G. VAN DER PAS
Spokesman
European Commission
Brussels
5 October

Top-notch readers

From Mr Nicholas Brett
Sir: I am disappointed that your columnist W. Stephen Gilbert feels *Radio Times* "has hurried down-market" under my editorship ("Why are we all so star-struck?" 23 September).

Upper- and middle-class (ABC1) readership of my *Radio Times* has risen to 69 per cent: it was 48 per cent for the magazine I inherited in August 1988. What am I to think? That *RT* is their bit of rough?

I notice in the same National Readership Survey data that the *Independent* has 836,000 ABC1 readers; *Radio Times* has 3,917,000.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS BRETT
Editor
Radio Times
London, W12
29 September

Facts that the press can report

From Mr Richard Stott

Sir: First rule of journalism. Check your quotes. I was misquoted by Henry Porter in the *Independent* today ("When they publish, damn them," 6 October).

This was taken from a quote in the *Times*, which has now acknowledged its error.

If he is seriously saying that nobody can report a crime in case somebody is later charged with committing it, it is nonsense. What happens if there is a big bomb and someone is arrested running away from the scene of the crime - does that mean that we cannot now say that 15 people died in the explosion?

Of course, I wouldn't say anything as fatuous as the words the *Independent* attributes to me. If Mr Porter had read *Today*, he would have found the correct version of what I said, which was:

This is a hysterical judgment. It is immensely patronising to suggest that jurors cannot tell the difference between newspaper reports and evidence in a court of law.

If the judge's view of what constitutes contempt was taken to its logical conclusion, it would mean that if there was a bomb explosion and someone was immediately arrested and charged, we could not report it.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD STOTT
Editor
Today
London, E1

Letters should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, Independent, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

(Fax: 0171-293 2456; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

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PROFILE: Johnnie Cochran

The best card player in LA

OJ's attorney won his case with an approach he has long since perfected, says Tim Cornwell

The old lady answering the phones at the Western district headquarters of the Los Angeles Police Department had her own verdict on the OJ Simpson case. Take defence attorney Johnnie Cochran and police officer Mark Fuhrman, she said, and lock them in the same cell. It would be fitting punishment for both, she thought.

Cochran and Fuhrman, it is true, were made for each other. Tape recordings of Fuhrman's naked racism were what made Cochran's claim of a police frame-up stick for the OJ jury. But Simpson's acquittal was actually just the latest of many bruising encounters between Cochran and the LAPD.

Johnnie Cochran this week was accused of single-handedly stoking the fires of racism to save his client. His fellow defence counsel Robert Shapiro said Cochran had "dealt the race card from the bottom of the pack". The father of victim Ronald Goldman said he should be "put away" for shoving a wedge between the races.

Indeed, in the closing days of the trial, Cochran appeared with bow-tied bodyguards from the Nation of Islam, the radical black group headed by Louis Farrakhan. The clean-cut Nation members are a symbol of black pride, but Farrakhan and his aides have a long history of anti-Semitism, blaming Jews for conspiring against blacks.

Combined with Cochran's comparing Mark Fuhrman to Adolf Hitler in a case where one victim is Jewish, it so offended Shapiro that he said he would never work with Cochran again.

But to accuse Cochran of wantonly crying racism in a crowded theatre is unfair. In 1966, the young attorney represented the wife of Leonard Deadwyler, who was shot and killed by the LAPD after a 90mph chase. Deadwyler was speeding to hospital because he thought his pregnant wife was in labour.

The inquest was televised, and though Cochran lost his case, Los Angeles had its first good look at

him. Over the next 30 years, his reputation – and his law firm – grew, largely by taking on the LAPD.

In 1981, Cochran won \$700,000 in an out-of-court settlement for the family of Ron Seniles, a black university football star who police said hanged himself in jail, but it was alleged had died in a choke hold. In 1991, he collected nearly \$10m from a jury for the family of a 13-year-old girl molested by an LAPD officer. Today Cochran is considered one of America's top trial lawyers, with wide-ranging connections throughout the Los Angeles legal and political establishments.

James Harold Cochran, 58, was born in Shreveport, Louisiana and moved to California at the age of six. His father was an insurance company executive, and Cochran's upbringing was firmly middle-class. He graduated from law school in 1964. Among his classmates was the future LA Mayor Tom Bradley. Cochran, like many defence lawyers, served briefly in the District Attorney's office as a prosecutor. There, Judge Lance Ito, who for 10 years prosecuted gang violence cases in LA, worked under

'He speaks with the cadence and rhythm of a preacher'

him before being appointed to the bench. It may have explained Ito's deferential treatment of Cochran early in the trial.

According to LA law professor Peter Aranella, who knows Cochran well and talked to him weekly through the Simpson trial, he is neither a stellar legal analyst nor particularly bright. But then, "very few great trial lawyers have brilliant minds". There is, says Aranella, "a warmth and a charisma to him that captivates everyone in the courtroom. He speaks with the



Cochran: 'There is a warmth and charisma to him that captivates everyone' Mark Richards/Colorific

cadence and rhythm of a preacher." Cochran is a true huckster, insisting that he "never, never" doubted Simpson's innocence. At the trial, he left colleague Barry Schenk to hammer on about the details of DNA evidence, while he launched into what the St Luke's Gospel had to say about the big lies from the

two middle-aged stars." wealthy and ambitious, Barbara wrote. "But behind their smooth, charismatic exteriors I can't help but see two men who have very little respect for women, who need to abuse and control the women in their lives, who use their money as a means of control."

OJ Simpson was an unlikely black martyr, though he came from the ghetto, he had remarried into the pretty white lives of West LA. But when in mid-1994 he pleaded with Cochran to join the case, he must have expected that the undercurrent of race would become a major theme for the defence. After all, when Liz Taylor had previously introduced Cochran to Michael Jackson at her mansion, the attorney set about turning his client from accused child molester to ethnic underdog, taking him round to churches and National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People meetings, where Cochran is a prominent member.

Johnnie Cochran was everywhere this week, lordling it in a succession of TV interviews, demanding that America face up to its race divides. At a time when the civil

rights movement in America is short of ideas and direction, he is emerging, in the words of former Mayor Bradley, as "a national hero to African Americans". He has proved himself smart enough to take on an \$8m prosecution team and win, on live TV, while he speaks to the heart of what many blacks feel about the live legacy of racism in America.

At the annual conference of the black caucus in the US Congress last month, Cochran flew in from Los Angeles as star guest. He was besieged by autograph-hunters, while former General Colin Powell looked on from the wings.

"I'm not sure that Johnnie has political ambitions," Professor Aranella says. "But I think he wants to be a player on the national stage of the civil rights movement and this has pushed him forward."

In his speech, Cochran compared the *People v OJ Simpson* to the landmark ruling from the Supreme Court desegregating schools, *Brown v Board of Education*. "In America," he said, "how could we, as blacks, possibly initiate the race card?" And the 5,000-member audience, like innocent jurors, ate out of his hand.

Do not mistake deals for reforms

As the establishment prepares to change sides, Labour must not abandon its radical project for flattery



ANDREW MARR
Columnist of the Year

Is the establishment changing sides? And if so, what does it mean for Labour's "young Britain"? The big business players of the Thatcher-Major era are turning their attention to Tony Blair's new Labour. Rupert Murdoch's News International, Sir Iain Vallance of British Telecom, Richard Branson, Lord Rothermere of Associated Newspapers – all give the impression that they now see Blair as Prime Minister-elect.

They have noticed the pungent, almost sexual scent of coming power and are shimmying instinctively towards it. So are scores of other movers of commercial Britain, now bidding for lunches, briefings and first-name terms.

The voters' verdict is seemingly being taken for granted by the Lords of the Market as they prepare for a change of regime. But this helps make the change happen. The last lot find it harder to make eye contact with private power: the next lot are being fussed over; and the country notices. There is a deal being done here. The big boys make their peace with what they think is the next government. In they think is a new status upon return. They confer a new status upon Labour. Both sides know what is going on.

For the Conservatives, this is humiliating. Ian Lang's anger about the cheeky BT announcement and ministerial angst about Murdoch are only part of the story. There are quiet defections all over the place. If things

carry on like this, they'll be left with Cedric Brown and nobody else. For business is disloyal. Business is unscrupulous. Business is business.

What, though, does the Labour Party think about it all? After years in the cold, demonising the corporate victors of Thatcherism, how do they feel when they find their leader being courted, apparently successfully, by the same men? I think it's fair to say that alongside a widespread twinging enthusiasm for Blair, there is some worry about new Labour's new mates. Few party workers can feel entirely easy about the arrival of so many glossy famous men in hand-made shoes; none will be happy, either, about the bouquets from Conservative commentators like Lord Rebbit, Sir David English, Paul Johnson and the editorialists at the *Sun*.

If they weren't uneasy, they would be naïfs. Labour is a radical party, and radicalism inescapably involves confrontations with concentrations of power. It is a challenge to the establishment, or it's merely the establishment renamed. A Labour Party that wasn't suspicious wouldn't be true to itself.

Tony Blair is aware of the dangers. As his performance at Brighton showed, he had spent part of the summer studying the Wilson years, including a close re-reading of Harold Wilson's speeches from the early Sixties. He concluded that they were pretty good, and were remembered so only because of the failures which followed them.

But why did Wilson's governments fail? The Blair assessment seems to be that Wilson was forced to dissipate his energies trying to hold an ill-disciplined, complex and squabbling organisation together. Wilson lost sight of the grand vision of 1963-4 because his attention was perpetually distracted by the party.

The memoirs and histories suggest there is a lot of truth in this. If it is the



Consenting adults: Mr Blair with Sir Iain Vallance Photograph: Reuters

full explanation, then Blair must, surely, out-perform Wilson. Unlike Wilson, he has made no compromises with his party. On every vote this week, from the referendum on PR to foundation schools, from Trident to the minimum wage, he sent just the messages he wanted it to. He has created a new structure which ensures that the fiercest internal arguments take place in policy forums, hidden from the media. He has a clearer line of command than any previous leader, owes less to the trade unions, chooses his own Chief Whip. He faces no serious or organised dissent.

Yes, this was a tightly controlled conference, but it was possible mostly because the party itself wanted to be controlled. The floor of the conference reacted with open-throated enthusiasm to Blair's speech; more to the point, I found even left-wing MPs approvingly quoting bits of it round

the fringe afterwards. If Wilson's problem was his party, Blair has eradicated it (I mean the problem, of course, not the party). There has been a cultural revolution, not merely an organisational coup.

But there was more to Wilson's failure than the condition of the party. He was a fresh-looking leader who promised national renewal, who used inspirational religious language ("Labour is a crusade or it is nothing") but who turned out to be merely a deal-maker who surrounded himself in office with millionaire cronies.

Left-of-centre politicians have a history of bad judgments about the Lords of the Market. Continental politics is littered with examples. Here, Wilson is the most recent, but not the most flagrant one: that stale palm goes to Lloyd George, an inspirational radical who became infatuated by bad men in fur-lined collars. Had Labour

been in power in the Eighties, the Robert Maxwell story would have trumped the Tapes scandal in France.

From the outside, these add up to a simple, dismal pattern, the perpetual recurrence of hope's corruption. But there is a real problem for leftish leaders. To be effective in office requires deal-making: governments cannot simply dictate or hector private-sector power. If you are a practical politician, like Blair, who wants above all to do things, to change things, then you have to roll up your sleeves, take a deep breath and engage. You do so knowing that the most pressing new friends will be worried people taking big risks in sensitive parts of the market where government regulations and contracts matter most. And you do so knowing that the most persistent flatterers are probably creeps. But even so, you engage.

The question is how to do so without letting them blunt your radicalism or corrupt your project. The answer is a triple combination. You must have very clear views about your priorities and your attitude to regulation – deals are always deals, never reforms. Second, you must have numerous and informed sources of advice. Above all, you must be personally incorruptible and retain your highest political ambitions – a matter of character about which I, for one, trust Tony Blair.

This is not a theoretical weekend sermon, nor does it imply that the worm has already entered the rose. It is a moral and political challenge whose urgent reality reflects the likelihood of a Labour government. For this was the week in which new Labour might have started to come apart and the Major revival might have begun. It hasn't been. Never underestimate the Conservatives. But their task is starting to look daunting, which is why, yes, the establishment is changing sides; and why on this occasion, the establishment is probably right.

Geared up for some serious twitching

This is a big weekend for birdwatchers – not such a rare breed. Willy Newlands explains

My first birdwatching kit was simplicity itself. Binoculars that worked quite well on sunny days, and a bird book with some artistic but inaccurate portraits of British birds.

Today I would be ashamed to go near the local reserve with anything so modest. Birdwatching has gone from small-scale hobby to multi-million pound industry in 20 years – and along the way it has managed to shed its image of being a nerdy pastime for would-be transients in camouflage jackets. Now you need designer waterproofs, hi-power scopes and 2kg binoculars, the "designer jewellery" of the pastime.

There are an estimated 2.2 million birders in Britain, of whom about 150,000 are hardcore enthusiasts who spend up to £2,000 on the kit – binoculars, scope, books – and often pay £3,000 or more for guided trips to exotic locations. They are the subject of intensive advertising that supports several birding magazines, shops and an annual fair. Good bird books sell more than a million copies.

This weekend more than 30,000 birders in the UK – along with those from 77 other countries – will take part in World Birdwatch. The RSPB is running the British activities at 140 sites around the country, putting the spotlight on the beauty and value of birds. They are also trying to dispel the traditional view of the obsessive twitcher: the solitary, strange and inadequate man lurking beside the reservoir.

Experts such as Dave Crockett, editor of *Bird Watching* magazine, say that image just isn't true any more. The birdwatcher's wife is no golf widow. She is likely to share in the hobby, which has the great advantage that you get better at it as you get more mature.

The dedicated collector of species will hire a helicopter or charter a boat to catch sight of the latest rarity to be blown to British shores. Hundreds of 'scope-toting fans turn up when an American warbler lands in a Surrey car park or an obscure Asian wader takes up temporary residence on a Hebridean islet. The man who has seen the most birds in the British Isles is Ron Johns, of Salthouse, Norfolk, with 502 on his list.

But the damage to farm or garden when a five-alarm twitch turns up can be devastat-

tating. When a houbara bustard landed in the east of England a few years ago, the farmer on whose fields it took up residence was nearly bankrupted by the trampling of his crops.

Birding literature is full of mini-dramas starring rare creatures. Twitchers have pursued an American thrasher into a loo in the Scillies, where it drowned; and stared solemnly for a day at a night heron on a Midlands marsh, which turned out to be a stuffed example hoist into a tree by a prankster. More than once they have seen their star rarely killed and devoured by some slightly less rare hawk or owl.

On a Shetland island, watchers photographed a Scops owl for days, until it quietly dropped off its perch and expired. They then had several months of arguments about whether it was "genuine".

The cognoscenti particularly enjoy these esoteric arguments about the likelihood of an owl or a marbled teal being a genuine thousand-mile migrant on a south-easterly airstream or an escapee from a Kent aviary two miles away.

At all levels it is a classless and good-natured hobby. Chris Meads, of the British Trust for Ornithology in Thetford, Norfolk, says that it is the continuation of the Gilbert White tradition – "people of a certain class, the squire and the parson, started our interest in local natural history and that spread down to teachers and pupils".

When the first field guides were published about 40 years ago, the RSPB's membership was 7,000. It has gone up a hundredfold. The RSPB admits that many of its members would rather watch wildlife on television than put on their wellies and go out into the woods to see real birds, but they generate a lot of money.

The main objection to birding is that some birders are obviously just out-of-context stamp collectors. On a recent trip to Moravia, I was with some twitches who refused even to focus their binoculars on some wonderful wild ibex because "they are not birds".

But if even 10 per cent of birdwatchers are hoisting in some awareness of the natural world, of ecology and even rural manners, that is a bonus. As biologists say: it may not be a good thing, but it's not bad either.

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obituaries / gazette

Francis Johnson

Francis Johnson was probably the last practising pre-Modernist architect in Britain.

When Johnson studied at the Leeds School of Architecture in the 1920s, Modernism was still a continental concern. The ideals of the Bauhaus, which were to revolutionise the way architecture was taught, had yet to spread to Britain. As a result Johnson was trained in the Classical principles of composition and design, with a firm emphasis on drawing. He continued to practise them until he died, working full-time into his late seventies, and part-time almost until his death.

Modernism passed him by — although he looked with horror on the damage it wrought on nearby Hull, whose great Georgian inheritance he defended with passion. Safely established in the remote Yorkshire town of Bridlington, with a dedicated team of assistants, a highly developed relationship with local craftsmen and a network of satisfied clients, Johnson was able to practise the civilised architecture he enjoyed, far from the spotlight of fashion. The result is a distinguished series of churches, houses and restorations which maintained the best traditions of restrained Classical architecture in the manner of his great 18th-century predecessor John Carr of York.

In the Thirties Johnson had bought Craven House, in Bridlington High Street, and for 20 years this building, fronted in 1810, was both his home and, from 1945, his office. Johnson moved in the mid-1950s to an 18th-century house outside the town, but Craven House remained home to his partnership,

which comprises two other architects and five technicians. Even in Yorkshire, establishing a Classical practice did not prove easy. The 1950s were hard, and it was only with increasing confidence among country-house owners in the 1960s that Johnson's workload began to grow. Sensing that there was perhaps a future for the country house, owners went to Johnson to turn unviable white elephants into practical places to live.

Sometimes the surgery was minor, a gentle reordering of kitchen and entrance, sometimes it was radical as excesses were removed, a good example being the remodeling of Houghton Hall, in the East Riding of Yorkshire, for Countess Fitzwilliam in 1957; Victorian additions were removed and the late-18th-century spirit of the house restored. Indeed, there was never a house touched by Johnson that was marred by his hand. Usually a much more attractive — and practical — building was the result.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s Johnson enjoyed quiet local success, gaining particular satisfaction from a number of completely new country houses, such as Sunderlandwick (1962), in the East Riding, for Sir Thomas and Lady Ferrers, built on a mature site, replacing a house burnt down on VJ Night, and Whitwell-on-the-Hill (1969), near Malton, for David Brotherton. Not that Johnson's work was monopolised by country houses. Churches, both restorations and a number of new designs, were an important part of his work, in-

cluding St Margaret, Hilston (1956), an essay in simple Dutch Classicism replacing the original church destroyed by a stray wartime bomb meant for Hull, 10 miles to the west.

He was also responsible for a number of successful housing schemes. But, except for occasional articles in *Country Life*, Johnson was ignored by the architectural press. Then, just when most architects would have been happily retired, Johnson came into his own with the Classical revival of the 1980s, a decade which proved to be much the busiest of his career.

Johnson's success lay in his essential practicality, in his innate understanding of the way a house worked, and in his development of a restrained Classical idiom appropriate for the reduced circumstances of the late-20th-century landowner. Not for him the florid porticoes and applied pilasters that have proved so popular among his younger rivals. Although devoted to the Classical orders, he tended to restrict their use to interiors. Instead he relied on pediments, the occasional bow-window and the immaculately proportioned relationship of window to wall to impart a restrained dignity to his designs, as in the main facade of Garrowby, near York, an almost completely new house making use of an existing building, for the third Earl of Halifax, which was completed in 1982.

Johnson's architectural roots lay firmly in the late 18th century, a popular period among architects searching between the wars for a more restrained approach to Classicism after the licence of the Edwardians. Johnson made a Grand Tour to Italy and Central Europe in 1931 on the strength of a travelling scholarship, but direct contact with the Italian masters is largely lacking in his work. Neither his sketchbooks nor the architectural works in his library ever became quarries for clever details. But, like many of his contemporaries, Johnson was profoundly influenced by the austere Scandinavian Classicism of the 1920s and 1930s which he experienced at first hand on a visit to Copenhagen. The simple clarity, beautiful



Far from the spotlight of fashion: Johnson at his Bridlington office, 1992. Photograph: Kippa Matthews

detailing and lack of self-conscious cleverness of contemporary Danish architecture particularly appealed to him.

In part, the austerity of Johnson's work reflected the limited budgets under which he laboured. He always regretted that he never had the chance to work on a new stone house, and his interior detailing was simple. There was seldom money for overt architectural expression, although the little temple-like pavilion which he designed for

the Pavilion Opera Company at Thorpe Tilney, in Lincolnshire, perhaps shows the direction he might have moved in with more indulgent clients.

But Johnson's restraint also grew out of an innate modesty, which perhaps explains why he was happy never to leave Bridlington, and was certainly reflected in his outspoken criticism of those whom he felt tried at all costs to be self-consciously original. For Johnson, originality could only be achieved in

a natural way as a result of a good brief.

At a time when the whole nature of architectural tradition is being re-examined, Johnson's decent, practical, handsome approach to design, and in particular to housing, would repay careful study by architects today.

Giles Worsley

Francis Frederick Johnson, architect, born Bridlington 18 April 1911; CBE 1991; died Leeds 29 September 1995.

Peter Williams

Peter Williams, the ballet critic, journalist, founder editor of *Dance and Dancers* magazine, and committee man, was tall, shy and enigmatic. Somewhat aloof and mannered, he smoked cigarettes through a long cigarette-holder and when confronted with an impressive spectacle would draw "Awfully pretty". It became a stock phrase for anything that pleased him.

He was born in 1914 at Burton Joyce, in Cornwall. After Harrow School he studied design at the Central School of Art and Design, which led to a dress-design business until, seeing a performance of the Diaghilev ballet, he became infected with a passion for dance, an art that appeared to him full of glamour but for which he was not equipped to be a participant.

He followed the ballet and in 1948 designed for Metropolitan Ballet, in New York, a work by John Burt Foster, *Designs with Strips*. In 1949, he designed Andrée Howard's *Selma* for Sadler's Wells Ballet, in London, but designing for the ballet was a penurious, spasmodic existence. He turned to writing and became assistant editor of Richard Buckle's magazine *Ballet*.

Leaving Buckle's employ in 1950, Williams established his own magazine, *Dance and Dancers*, which became part of the Dosse empire of *Books and Bookmen*, *Films and Filming*, etc. Laid-back and secretive, he spent little time at the office, preferring to edit the magazine from his home in Eaton Square.

Despite his shyness, Williams liked to socialise with dancers, many of whom he wrote about. He became a friend of Anton Dolin and spent a great deal of time with Festival Ballet, giving them lavish publicity.

Dance and Dancers grew in popularity and he drew together a group of regular contributors. During the 1950s Williams was an occasional visitor to my School of Russian Ballet, in Chelsea, west London, to watch class. He was keen to learn all he could about classical dance.

Once, when he was becoming bored, I whisked him home to lunch on wild duck and a bottle of Moselle, which seemed to lift his spirits. It led to a commission for me to write a series of articles for his magazine, entitled

"Steps of the Dance", based on the Russian School.

Williams became ballet critic of the *Daily Mail* and deputy critic of the *Observer*, a post he held for many years. Migrating to the Crush Bar set at Covent Garden changed his outlook. There he became enmeshed with a coterie of critics who took a specific line to praise or to damn, and spent their ink in denigrating foreign companies and in praising the rapidly growing establishment of English ballet.

When Williams dismissed the works of the great Leonide Massine, it seemed that he had transferred his stance from balletomania and connoisseur to the realms of politician. His change of heart, however, secured for him a certain security and a future that journalism could not give him. He became an esteemed committee man whose gentle art of diplomacy earned him new friends.

From 1965 he served on the music panel of the Arts Council of Great Britain and the Advisory Committee on Dance under the chairmanship of Ninette de Valois (1965-7).

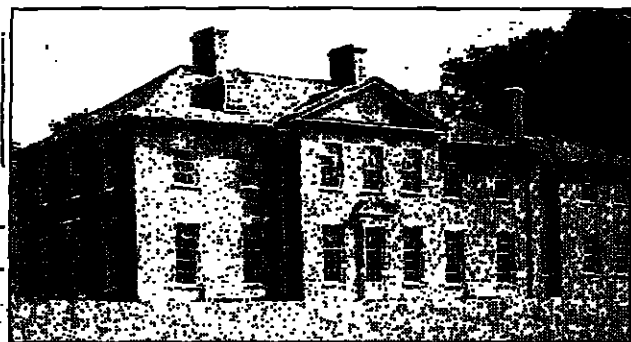
Williams went on to become chairman of the drama and dance advisory committee of the British Council. Since 1975 he had been chairman of the Dancers' Pensions and Resettlement Fund. In this capacity he did much to improve the dancer's lot, and this was probably his greatest contribution to what had previously been a very insecure world.

On Williams's retirement after three decades in harness, the editorship of *Dance and Dancers* was taken over by John Percival, ballet critic of the *Times*.

Williams's strongest subject was decor and his book *Masques of Ballet Design* was published in 1980. Williams was as a writer inclined to sail with the prevailing wind. But in spite of his vacillations he did maintain a quiet dignity, a measure of good taste, an ability to write tidily, and a consistent love of the ballet.

John Gregory

Peter Lancelotti Williams, writer, editor, ballet designer, born Burton Joyce, Cornwall 12 June 1914; editor, *Dance and Dancers* 1950-80; CBE 1971; died Cornwall 10 August 1995.



In the best tradition of restrained Classical architecture: Johnson's Garrowby Hall, Yorkshire, completed 1982. Photograph: Country Life

Professor A. F. L. Beeston

It is my privilege to claim that my own undergraduate study of Arabic began just a little before A.F.L. Beeston left the Bodleian Library and became the Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford University, which post he occupied from 1955 until his retirement in 1979. At the time of his appointment his teaching experience had been limited, but it has always been my boast that I was one of his first pupils.

Freddie Beeston was undoubtedly one of the more colourful figures on the Oxford landscape, marked out by his lengthy Lisztian hair, ample girth, booming laugh and smoker's cough. Never a mere eccentric, he was a man of genuine individuality and character, and a delightful companion of vast reading and wide culture. In addition to his openness and conviviality, there was a private and introspective side, which was by his nature less known, and it was there that one would find his deep Christian faith.

His professional linguistic

accomplishments were formidable, and his supplementary knowledge stretched from Welsh via Hungarian to Chinese. An autobiographical memoir, circulated privately, recounts his childhood fascination with foreign languages ("the more exotic the better") and his precocious attempts at deciphering Sabaeen inscriptions in the British Museum.

From Westminster School he won a Scholarship to Christ Church, where he read Classical Moderations and then, after being subjected to the somewhat unusual teaching methods of Professor D.S. Margoliouth, which he delighted to describe, he took a First Class Honours degree in Arabic and Persian. His DPhil in the area of his beloved South Arabian Epigraphy followed, and then he began his long-planned career as a librarian in the Bodleian Library. This was interrupted by his war service from November 1940 to April 1946, as Lieutenant, and then Captain, in the Intelligence

Corps. At the Bodleian he rose to be Sub-Librarian and Keeper of Oriental Books and Manuscripts, and then came his election as Laudian Professor, which was a surprise to some at the time but which was triumphantly vindicated.

His scholarly productions are noteworthy for their dense, yet precise, thought, and elegant expression. St John Philby once judged that Beeston was too self-critical and published too little. However, after a life of careful scholarship which continued in his retirement, he leaves a varied output, including his contribution to the Catalogue of the Persian, Turkish, Hindustani and Pushtu Manuscripts in the Bodleian, his *A Descriptive Grammar of Epigraphic South Arabian* (1962), which was always the centre of his interests, his contributions to the study of Arabic language, notably *The Arabic Language Today* (1970) and *Written Arabic: an approach to the basic structures* (1968), and editions and translations of classical Arabic

authors, of which *The Singing Birds of al-Jahiz* is perhaps the best known and the most widely used. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1965.

His tenure of the Laudian Professorship coincided with the creation of new posts and with the steady increase in the number of students, the building of the Oriental Institute, where for the first time all parts of the faculty were brought under one roof, and the expansion of the undergraduate syllabus into modern Arabic literature. Through all this Beeston presided as an affable and approachable *princeps inter pares*, always helpful and full of encouragement for younger colleagues. For undergraduates and graduates also he was an infinitely patient and caring mentor in tutorials and supervisions. His frequent hospitality was an expression of his love of good company and of good food and drink.

Through his Professorial Fellowship he gained a congenial

home at St John's College, where he continued to the end to be "a good college man" of a type possibly less commonly found these days. For many years he served as Dean of Degrees and delivered the required Latin formulae in his deep, resonant voice. The boisterous Schools dinners he hosted were memorable indeed. On one occasion, after further imbibings at the Perch, a walk back along the Isis ended in an impromptu swim. Freddie Beeston was, too, one of the faithful denizens of the now defunct Parson's Pleasure, the male swimming place on the River Cherwell. To mark its demise Beeston was in the photograph (strategically camouflaged) that appeared in the press.

In very many cases the teacher-pupil relationship developed into mutual friendship. Beeston remained in contact with numerous former students, not infrequently extending his friendship and interest to their children. His 80th birthday, in 1991, was celebrated with two festschrift volumes, one aptly entitled *Arabic Felix Luminosus Britannicus* (A.F.L.B.).

Within the last year he had faced an illness with candour and fortitude, and was making a good recovery. We were perhaps deluded into imagining that his "luminous" presence would always be with us.

Donald S. Richards

Alfred Felix Landon Beeston, Orientalist, born Barnes, London 23 February 1911; Keeper of Oriental Books, Bodleian Library, Oxford 1946-55; Laudian Professor of Arabic, Oxford University 1955-78; Fellow, St John's College, Oxford 1955-78 (Emeritus); FBA 1963; books include *Baldawi's Commentary on Surah 12* 1963; *Written Arabic Today* 1970; *Selections from the Poetry of Bessar* 1977; *Samples of Arabic Prose* 1977; *The Epistle of Singing Birds of al-Jahiz* 1980; *Sabaean Grammar* 1984; died Oxford 29 September 1995.



Beeston: Arabic Felix Luminosus Britannicus

Births, Marriages & Deaths

DEATHS

Mr Dr Joseph Kwok Wai, of Mosney, Birmingham, in hospital on 4 October 1995, in his 77th year. Funeral Mass at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, Thursday 12 October, at 10.30am, followed by cremation at Lodge Hill, Flowers (family only) and if desired donations for Stoneywell Housing Association, Body Positive or Venice in Peru may be sent to A.B. Taylor, Funeral Services Ltd, 49 Wolverhampton Road South, Birmingham B12 2AY, telephone 0121-634 4340.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, etc.) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Gazette, London E14 5DL, telephone 0171-293 2811 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2812) or fax to 0171-293 2810, and are charged at 56p a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, funerals, forthcoming marriages, etc.) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Prince of Wales, President, Royal Agricultural College, today confers degrees at the first degree ceremony at the college, Cirencester, Gloucestershire. Princess Alexandra tomorrow attends a performance of *Verdi's Rigoletto* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London WC2.

Changing of the Guard TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment presents the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.15am. In Battalion Grenadier Guards attend the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.15am. In Battalion Grenadier Guards attend the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.15am. In Battalion Grenadier Guards attend the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.15am.

Birthdays

TODAY: Miss Jenny Abramsky, controller, BBC Radio Five Live, 49; Miss June Allyson, actress, 88; Mr Christopher Booker, journalist and author, 88; Mr Richard Caldicot, actor, 87; Sir Colin Chandler, chief executive, Vickers plc, 56; Mr Shura Cherkassky, pianist, 84; Mr Joseph Cooper, pianist and broadcaster, 83; Sir Zelman Cowen QC, former Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, 76; Sir Andrew Douthett, actor, 72; Professor Harold Dexter, organist, and Professor, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 75; Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Fletcher, 79; Dr Mark Girouard, architectural historian, 64; Lord Glenarthur, former governor-general, 81; Mr Brian Hoban, former Head Master of Harrow School, 74; Mr Terence Hodgkinson, former director, Wallace Collection, 82; Mr Clive James, critic and television presenter, 56; Mr Thomas Kenally, author, 60; Mr George Kynoch MP, 49; Lt-Gen Sir Derek Lang, soldier and management consultant, 82; Miss Yalith Memuhin, pianist, 74; Sir John Stocker, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, 77; Maj-Gen Julian Thompson, 61; Miss Joyce Towell, late dance chairman, 88; The Most Rev Desmond Tutu, Archbishop of Cape Town, 64; Sir Colin Walker, chairman, National Blood Authority, 61; Professor David Wallace, Vice-Chancellor, Loughborough University of Technology, 50; Mr Graham Yallop, cricketer, 43; Mr Yo Yo Ma, cellist, 40.

TOMORROW: The Marquess of Anglesey, former Lord-Lieutenant of Gwynedd, 73; Miss Betty Boothroyd MP, Speaker of the House of Commons, 66; Professor Sir John Cadogan, Visiting Professor of Chemistry, Imperial College, London University, 65; Viscount Caldecote, former chairman, Delta Group, 78; Mr David Carradine, actor, 59; Professor Garth Chapman, zoologist, 78; Sir

Nicolas Chetani, former ambassador, 85; Mr Emrys Davies, former High Commissioner to Barbados, 61; Professor Hugh de Winton, physician and nephrologist, 80; Sir Edward Eveleigh, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 78; Mr Edgar Fay QC, former circuit judge, 87; Sir Michael Fox, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, 74; Mr Brandon Gough, former chairman, Coopers & Lybrand, 58; Mr Milner Gray, artist and designer, 96; Mr John Harman, former chairman, Asda, 56; Professor Sir Richard Harrison, Professor Emeritus of Anatomy, Cambridge University, 67; Mr Neil Harvey, cricketer, 67; Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe, landscape architect, 95; Mr Bill Maynard, actor, 67; Mr Alastair Milne, former Director-General, BBC, 65; Dr César Milstein, biologist and biochemist, 68; Sir Mark Oliphant, physicist and former Governor of South Australia, 94; Dame Marie Park, Director, Royal Ballet School, 58; The Very Rev John Paterson, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, 73; The Hon Sir Peter Ramsbottom, former ambassador to Washington, 76; Mr Ray Reardon, snooker champion, 63; Mr Albert Roux, chef, 60; Sir Robert Scholey, former chairman of British Steel, 74; Mr Dennis Silk, former Warden of Ridley College, 64; Mr Nigel Spearman MP, 65; Mr Toru Takemitsu, composer, 67; Mr Godfrey Talbot, author, broadcaster and former BBC Court correspondent, 87; Sir Ray Tindle, chairman, Tindle Newspapers, 69; Mr Peter Wood, theatre and television director, 67.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Maj-Gen Sir Ralph Abercromby, soldier, 1794; Heinrich Himmler, Nazi SS, 1900. Deaths: Edgar Allan Poe, novelist, 1849; Oliver Wendell Holmes, physician and writer, 1894; Clarence Birdseye, inventor of quick-freezing, 1956; Mario Lanza (Alfredo Arnold

Cocozza), singer, 1959. On this day: Crete revolted against Turkey and proclaimed its union with Greece, 1908; the German Democratic Republic was set up in Eastern Germany, 1949; the *Independent* was first published, 1866. Today is the Feast Day of St Arctandus or Arctandus, St Helmas, St Justina of Padua, St Mark, pope and St Oystin.

TOMORROW: Births: Eddie (Edward Vernon) Rickenbacker (Rickenbacker), First World War fighter pilot, 1890; Juan Perón, president of Argentina, 1895. Deaths: Henry Fielding, novelist, 1754; Clemens Richard Antile, first Earl Antile, statesman, 1967. On this day: the final consecration of St Mark's, Venice, took place, 1085; King's College London was opened, 1831; the Post Office Tower opened in London, 1965. Today is the Feast Day of St Demetrius, St Simeon Seneca, St Kyme, St Marcellus, St Pelagia (or Margaret) the Penitent, St Reparata of Caesarea, and St Thais.

Receptions

HM Government

Mr Raymond Robertson MP, Minister for Education, Housing and Fisheries at the Scottish Office, hosted a reception held yesterday in the Great Hall, Edinburgh Castle, for representatives of District Salmon Fishery Boards.

Durham University

Former students of the University of Durham (including King's, Armstrong and Teacher Training Colleges) should have received the Autumn Edition of *Durham First*, the University of Durham's magazine. Any one who has not done so is invited to contact the Development Office, Old Shire Hall, Durham DH1 3HP, for despatch of a copy (or telephone 0191-374 4682).

Give us a devout, scholarly and useful clergy

I recall the clergy photographed on the doorstep of our vicarage as they went into church 61 years ago, on 9 October 1934, to induct my father as vicar. Each was an incumbent of one village; products of Oxbridge, they were confident men, guardians of the culture as well as the faith. They addressed each other by surname like members of a club.

Canon Smith was still marking in the Cambridge University theological finals. He was also as nutty as a fruitcake. The day war was declared in 1939 he walked round his remote village of Ingoldby with an armband saying "Air Raid Warden". John Josiah Crathorne, from Crathorne in Yorkshire, was on the contrary a great help to his parishioners when bombs fell on his village by mistake. Canon Vessey was a product of Eton and Oxford and for 40 years vicar of a village of less than a hundred souls. One could go on.

These were "rich men, furnished with ability, dwelling peacefully in their habitations". But not rich financially. I guess they never drank wine at meals. They spent their holidays with relations at Abergavenny or in Yorkshire. But they had other wealth. E.M. Tweed, of Burton-Led-Coggles, was a top mathematician of Christ's College, Cambridge. Another coached boys for university entrance, another was a regular reviewer of books.

These men brought real quality to their villages; their ministry was human and it was incarnational. They were among their people and they loved them in an unselfish way. If that isn't an English form of redemption I don't know what is. It was said of the Edwardian clergy of the Church of England that they were "the best-educated clergy in Europe but the

faith & treason

Never mind how well the Church of England is organised, maintains the Bishop of Worcester, the Right Rev Philip Goodrich, it is no good if its priests have nothing to say.

ologically the most ignorant". There's the rub. They brought no working theology to the Church of England to equip it for its mission. They were not agents of change. I remember Archbishop William Temple being regarded as suspect because he was stirring the devotee about unemployment.

The clergy then lived on the historic endowments of their livings. Lay people paid not a penny towards their stipends and expenses of office were unthought of. Clergy could be their own man and snap their fingers at criticism — though criticism was not often made.

The Second World War swept away this way of life. Four hundred pounds a year and a house may have been adequate in 1934. It was no longer so in 1945. The clergy in 1995 are almost wholly paid by the laity, who seek value for money. Managers on parochial church councils are tempted to push clergy around. They tend to see them as functionaries of the Church who should have continuous training and, if they do not achieve, should be fired. It is not surprising that morale is said

to be low amongst today's clergy. Those who have been well trained know that flashy success will not be granted to those who follow a crucified Lord. Others, who know how to work for the community and with the community, have an assured place. It is, however, worth considering some of the things with which clergy have to contend.

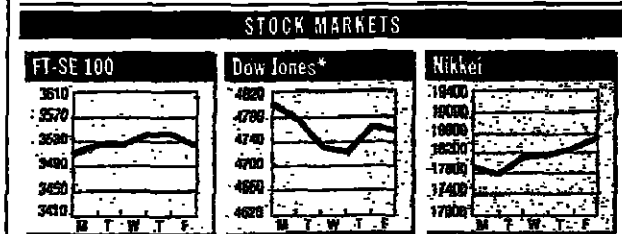
There is the disappearance of Sunday as a different day. There is the universal ignorance of Christianity. Then there is the problem of living in a plutocracy when even 40 years in full-time ministry will not take you beyond the salary on which your youngest daughter starts. It is a good thing to be a guardian of the culture as well as the faith, but what is the culture? Some say it doesn't exist except in so far as like-minded people are linked by the Internet or communications technology. Then there is the realisation that much of the caring work is now done by others.

Yet people's expectation of the clergy does not damp down. A clergyman is to be a spiritual mentor, teacher, administrator, social worker, orator, liturgical adviser, counsellor, confidant and fundraiser. No one person is sufficient for these things. Only a healthy detachment, the constitution of an ox or a sense of humour — and an unshaken trust in God expressed in a daily discipline of prayer — can possibly enable a priest to survive.

Survive he or she must. In the Coronation service we ask God to grant us "a devout, scholarly and useful clergy". Without one, the Church of England will become like a swimming pool where all the noise comes from the shallow end. It does not matter how well organised we are if we no longer have anything to say.

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MARKET SUMMARY



Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	12 Mth High	12 Mth Low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	3626.5	-17.9	-0.5	3570.8	2943.4	4.0
FTSE 250	3079.0	-12.3	-0.4	3061.3	2300.9	3.4
FTSE 350	1763.4	-8.1	-0.5	1778.3	1477.0	3.9
FT Small Cap	1976.6	+1.1	+0.1	1963.1	1676.6	3.3
FT All-Share	1743.4	-7.4	-0.4	1749.9	1480.6	3.8
New York	4767.0	+4.3	+0.1	4801.8	3674.6	2.4
Tokyo	18660.3	+285.8	+1.5	20148.8	14485.4	0.8
Hong Kong	9873.9	-14.1	-0.1	9940.0	6967.9	3.3
Frankfurt	2171.4	-37.4	-1.7	2317.0	1911.0	1.9
Paris	1809.8	+9.3	+0.5	2017.3	1721.8	3.8
Milan	9766.0	-13.0	-0.1	10911.0	8266.0	2.0

* New York closes at 1430 hours / New York graph at 1330 hours

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Index	Price	Change	% Change	Index	Price	Change	% Change
Boddington Group	389.5	31.5	8.8	Generali Group	462	25.5	5.4
Boys	620	20.5	4.8	Polysar	153	7	4.4
Wicks	136	6	4.6	West Group	289	11	3.7
MFI Furniture	144	6	4.4	Premier Oil	27.5	1	3.5
Arncliffe	276	9.5	3.5	Coca Cola	199	7	3.4

INTEREST RATES

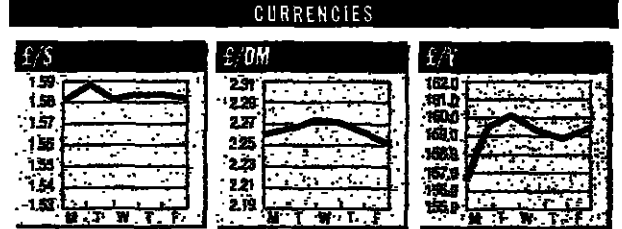


* New York closes at 1430 hours / New York graph at 1330 hours

Money Market Rates

Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	5 Year
UK	6.72	6.72	6.04	8.82	8.22	8.67	8.67
US	5.75	5.81	6.05	7.76	6.43	7.95	7.95
Japan	0.34	0.31	2.81	4.60	3.46	4.97	4.97
Germany	4.00	4.00	6.56	7.73	7.24	8.10	8.10

CURRENCIES



* New York closes at 1430 hours / New York graph at 1330 hours

OTHER INDICATORS

Indicator	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Indicator	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
£ (London)	1.5915	-0.20	1.5880	£ (London)	0.6329	+0.08	0.6297
\$ (New York)	1.5940	-0.15	1.5925	\$ (New York)	0.6313	+0.06	0.6277
DM (Frankfurt)	2.2546	-0.24	2.4926	DM (Frankfurt)	1.4282	+0.09	1.4446
Yen (Tokyo)	158.49	+10.68	158.40	Yen (Tokyo)	100.80	+10.45	98.75

* New York closes at 1430 hours / New York graph at 1330 hours

IN BRIEF

Indicator	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Indicator	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
Oil Brent \$	15.65	+0.04	16.85	RPI	149.9	3.0p	2.4
Gold \$	383.00	-0.25	391.80	GDP	2.8p	4.1	12 Oct
Gold £	242.16	+0.16	246.73	Base Rates	6.75p	5.25	-

Source: Datastream

Third player may join race for Aran

Aran Energy, the Irish oil company, said it has received an approach from a third party, which may lead to an alternative offer being made for the company. Aran is currently the subject of a hostile bid from Arco of the US and analysts have speculated that rival bidders might include Chevron and Statoil. Aran said the potential offer has requested information on Aran, which will also be made available to Arco. It said shareholders will be kept informed but meantime should take no action.

Airbus project wants Asian partners

Jean Pierson, chairman of the Airbus consortium that includes British Aerospace, said the company was keen to have Asian partners in a project to build a new aircraft that envisages a passenger capacity of between 600 and 800 and is for 2003 to 2005. The company believed it needed more global participation and was looking for partnerships with companies in India, Indonesia, China and South Korea for its project, he said.

RMC buys builders merchants

RMC Group has bought a number of builders merchant outlets, including freeholds and leaseholds from Wickes for £9.3m cash. More than 50 per cent of the Builders Mate branches have been disposed of, including the 23 branches sold to RMC. The 23 branches had net assets of £12.1m at 31 December 1994 and reported sales of £29.8m and profits of £1.3m in that year.

Italy orders Westland helicopters

GKN and its Italian partner Agusta have won an order worth about £150m from Italy's defence ministry for 16 EH101 helicopters. They will be assembled by Agusta and the first deliveries are expected in early 1998. The EH101 helicopter has been developed jointly by Agusta and GKN's Westland under a partnership agreement. In July this year GKN won the contract to supply attack helicopters to the British Army.

Laker plans Good Friday take-off

British cut-price air travel pioneer Sir Freddie Laker says he is targeting Good Friday next year, 5 April, as the start-up day for his planned new transatlantic services. The first route will be to Fort Lauderdale in Florida from Gatwick airport. To the UK, Sir Freddie plans once-daily, non-stop DC-10 flights: four-a-week to Gatwick, two to Manchester and one to Glasgow. The move follows the formation of Laker Airways in partnership with Texan oil magnate Oscar Wyatt, who will own 51 per cent of the airline, with the 73-year-old Briton holding 49 per cent.

Oyston quits consultancy

Lancashire Enterprises, an economic development consultancy, yesterday announced that Owen Oyston, the media tycoon, had resigned as a director of the company. Earlier this year Mr Oyston was charged with four rape offences, which he denies.

Global phone network step nearer

Odyssey Telecommunications, the international company planning a global, satellite-based telephone network, yesterday announced a \$2.3bn contract with TRW of the United States to build the system. The joint venture company, owned by Telelobe Canada and TRW, is to seek financing and international partners by early 1996.

Prospect of agreement with bankers recedes because refinancing needs 100% vote

Eurotunnel makes plea to Major

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

Sir Alastair Morton, co-chairman of Eurotunnel, has demanded government compensation and other help for the financially stricken company in personal meetings with John Major, Kenneth Clarke, the chancellor, and Sir George Young, the transport secretary.

Announcing losses in the first half of the year of £464.5m before tax, Sir Alastair confirmed he was campaigning for several billion pounds from three groups - the tunnel contractors, railways and the governments on both sides of the channel - which would be put towards paying off debts to banks.

Sir Alastair said "In 1986-87 a deal was struck and it has not been delivered and it is costing us a lot. It is not a question of finding someone to blame but of insisting on our rights."

It also emerged that the prospect of an early agreement between Eurotunnel and its 225 bankers has receded dramatically because a refinancing plan will require a 100 per cent vote in favour.

The difficulty of getting every bank in a large syndicate to agree on complex refinancing has led to widespread introduction of majority voting in corporate loan agreements, to prevent chaotic and long drawn out negotiations.

But although an 85 per cent majority vote has been applied in Eurotunnel's recent negotiations with banks, the new talks revert to the old basis of unanimity. Bankers fear this will give a powerful lever to small minorities of disaffected lenders.

Eurotunnel said it hoped to agree a financial package with its principal bankers by the end of January. But Sir Alastair made clear that approval by all the banks was unlikely before

"well into mid-year at the earliest. You will find bankers saying longer than that."

Eurotunnel's auditors, KPMG and Beca Price Waterhouse, in a statement heavily qualifying the accounts, said that in the absence of a bank refinancing, shareholders' funds could be reduced to less than half of the equity capital before the end of the 18 month interest standstill period. The accounts were approved on a going concern basis.

Sir Alastair said total claims Eurotunnel was making against contractors, railways and the governments were "billions plural - more than two and then some." But the reaction of the Prime Minister, Sir Alastair conceded, was to "hope that it would go away."

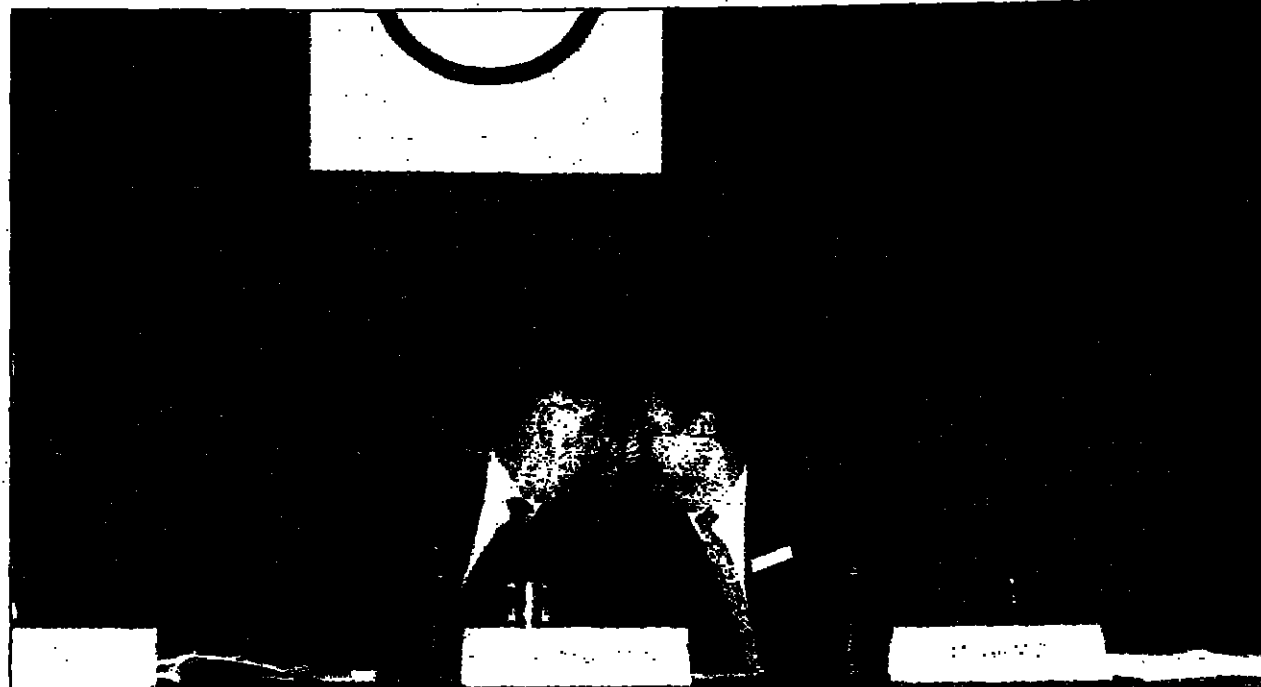
Eurotunnel is waiting for the results of arbitration proceedings against the French and British railways and has lodged a new claim against Trans-Manche Link, the tunnel builder, for alleged unreliability and high operating costs - which TML is resisting.

Part of the claim against the governments is for a level playing field with the ferry operators on duty free concessions - which he called a "disgraceful government subsidy for the ferries - and on safety."

Sir Alastair said Eurotunnel wished to "ensure that the safety requirements placed on the ferries are as onerous and costly as those accepted by us."

He also believed the two governments had not fulfilled commitments to develop infrastructure on both sides of the channel which were made when the project was conceived. If no help was forthcoming, he said the claims against the governments could end in arbitration.

Eurotunnel announced the creation of two consultative shareholder committees, in



Head-to-head: Sir Alastair Morton (left) with Eurotunnel treasurer Michael Grant yesterday Photograph: Jane Baker

Channel price war looms

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

Sir Alastair Morton, Eurotunnel's co-chairman, said that the company was being unwillingly "towed along into a price war" by the suicidal action of the ferries.

Eurotunnel is to issue its brochure for the new season "shortly" and while the company's executives refused to be drawn on its contents, there were hints that frequent travellers would be rewarded with discounts.

Given that the ferries are adding, rather than as expected withdrawing, capacity, there is no scope for any price increases and reductions on those journeys, apart from those at peak holiday times, seem inevitable.

Already the toll off in leisure traffic from the summer was quite marked in September. The number of cars using the tunnel fell from the August peak of 145,861 cars to 105,914 in September.

Faced with that amount of spare capacity, Eurotunnel earlier this month announced price cuts of a third on their duty free shops, making them far cheaper than the ferries.

Mr Le Maire's family holding of 60,000 Eurotunnel shares has lost £140,000 in value from this year's high.

Sir Alastair said there had been no request from bankers for a debt for equity swap, which he said would only be a last resort. However, it is believed that the refinancing could include bonds or warrants issued to the banks and convertible into equity at a later stage if Eurotunnel's performance does not improve.

He added: "In the longer term, the bankers will get their money back and our shareholders will do very well. But not very soon."

Sir Alastair said this would put the ferry companies on the spot as either they would have to respond by cutting prices on duty free, their main source of profit, or lose market share of traffic to Eurotunnel. Sir Alastair claimed that the ferries' profit on duty free exceeded their total profit.

On freight, Eurotunnel appears to have been very successful in attracting traffic away from the slower ferries. The company claims a 50 per cent market share in accompanied lorries on the Dover/Folkestone - Calais route.

Franc crashes to 3-month low

PAUL WALLACE
Economics Editor

The French franc tumbled on the foreign exchanges, losing 1 per cent of its value against the Deutsche Mark and taking the franc to a three-month low against the German currency.

Worries about the political unpopularity of Jacques Chirac's government and its failure to square up to France's economic and fiscal problems led dealers to drive the franc down through the 3.50 level to close at 3.5075, its lowest point since the end of June.

The sense of crisis was heightened when the Banque de France suspended its 5-10 day lending window and reimposed its 24-hour lending rate at 6.15 per cent, a step the central bank has taken when the franc has come under pressure on previous occasions. The move was caused by a rise in three-month money rates from 6.375 to 7 per cent.

The markets are testing the willingness of the French authorities to impose another debilitating increase in interest rates on the economy, said Kit Juckes, currency strategist at NatWest Markets.

Rumours about a resignation of the prime minister, Alain Juppé, fuelled the market, as it absorbed the latest polling evidence about the unpopularity of the Chirac government. A Sofres survey for Le Figaro on Thursday showed a massive decline in the confidence of voters in Chirac and Alain Juppé.

However, the principal reason for the renewed test of the franc fort was renewed scepticism about the ability of the economy to withstand the interest rate medicine necessary to tether the franc to the Deutsche Mark.

"France is in the same devil's dilemma as the UK in September 1992," said Stuart Thompson, international economist at Nikko Europe.

"There is a growing crisis in France between the government's objective of meeting the Maastricht criteria for monetary union and the need to cut unemployment."

"That crisis seems set to build on itself next week with a series of public sector strikes starting on Tuesday against the government's imposition of a pay freeze."

The measure has been introduced to help the govern-



* New York closes at 1430 hours / New York graph at 1330 hours

Output growth takes pressure off rates

PAUL WALLACE
Economics Editor

A bigger than expected bounce-back in manufacturing output in August quelled some of the hopes for an early cut in interest rates. Although the jump in output took manufacturing back to its previous record high in March 1990, the annual rate of growth continued to fall to 1.3 per cent.

Manufacturing output rose by 0.6 per cent in August, double the monthly increase the markets had been expecting. The decline in July was also revised down from 0.4 to 0.2 per cent.

"On this data it is less likely that the economy is moving into recession and that rates will need to be cut to prevent this," said David Hillier, UK economist at NatWest Markets.

Movements in the short sterling contract used by the City to bet on future interest rates showed that the markets agreed with this assessment, with the implied rate of interest in December rising from 6.55 to 6.60 per cent.

Half the increase in manufacturing in August came from engineering which grew by 1 per cent in the month. A further sixth came from food, drink and

tobacco which grew by 0.8 per cent in the month.

Falls in oil and gas extraction and the output of the utilities meant that the broader but more erratic industrial production index was unchanged.

Despite this short-term picture of stagnation, the Central Statistical Office raised its estimate of the trend rate of growth of industrial production to 1.5 per cent from the 1 per cent it had calculated last month.

The latest figure may have dispelled some of the worst fears about a drop in manufacturing, but the unusually hot summer played its part. Increased output of beer and soft drinks accounted for a third of the 0.3 per cent increase in manufacturing output in the three months ending August compared with the previous three months.

Concern about the buoyancy of the economy was cast by the latest reading of the longer leading indicator of the UK economy which declined again in August to its lowest level since January 1991.

The index which tends to lead the economy by just over a year has now been falling since June 1994.

Brewery takeover will shed 500 jobs

Clifford German

About 500 jobs will go under yesterday's agreed £480m bid by Greenall for the Boddington Group pub chain. The deal, still to be approved by shareholders, would create a new group worth almost £1.5m.

The merged group intends to close four offices in the Warrington area and half the 44 Boddington wholesale depots in north-west England to create savings of £18m a year.

Greenall is offering 17 new shares and £20 in cash for every 25 shares in Boddington. As an alternative Boddington shareholders can opt for up to £73.39p in cash and 5.13 shares for every 25 Boddingtons.

Boddington shares gained another 31p to 389p yesterday, after leaping 86p late on Thursday when Boddington confirmed the talks. After a late fall of 9.5p on Thursday, Greenall shares fell a further 26.5p to 462p yesterday, which values the bid at £480m and Boddington shares at 394p, 45 per cent more than they were trading earlier in the week. The enhanced cash option values them at 388.5p.

The bid will cost Greenall £16m, and reorganisation costs a further £23m, half of which will pay for the redundancies. Buying out Boddington directors' options will cost a further £8m. If shareholders accept the standard offer Greenall will need to raise £100m in cash and it will also assume £124m of Boddington debt, which will raise gearing from a little under 50 per cent to around 75 per cent, excluding any assets that might be disposed of.

Greenall's chairman and chief executive, Andrew Thomas, forecasts profits of not less than £10m in the year just ended, an improvement of 33 per cent, and a final dividend of 8.44p, which Boddington shareholders will also get. Analysts have been forecasting profits of £43m for 1995-96 for Boddington.

Both groups disposed of their breweries as the industry restructured following the Monopolies Commission report in 1988 and have made good profits at the expense of the brewers thanks to an oversupply of brewing capacity. But the merger is necessary to maintain the pubs' purchasing power as the brewers rationalise capacity, according to Mr Thomas.

Ailing Trafalgar sells the Ritz

TOM STEVENSON
Deputy City Editor

Trafalgar House has sold the Ritz hotel in what is expected to be a series of disposals to shore up its fragile balance sheet. The Barclay brothers, owners of London's Howard Hotel and the European newspaper, are to pay £75m for a hotel that has defamed luxurious accommodation.

The disposal of Trafalgar's last hotel is the first sign that a series of flying squads put into subsidiary companies by new chief executive Nigel Rich is having an impact. Mr Rich ordered a complete re-evaluation of Trafalgar after it declared a larger than expected loss of £48m for the first half of the year. To March, with teams assigned the task of recommending which parts of the Cunard

to engineering to housebuilding group should be retained. A spokesman for Trafalgar House said it had achieved a full price for the hotel, in excess of its book value of £60m, and a high multiple of operating profits in the year to September 1994 of £3.78m.

The disposal marks a change of strategy following Mr Rich's attempt to buy Trafalgar out of trouble by launching a bid for

Northern Electric last December. The bid, the first for a Rec, was widely criticised as little more than financial engineering - the deal would have gone a long way to solving Trafalgar's advanced corporation tax problem.

The reclusive Barclay brothers own a string of expensive hotels around the world. They live in Monte Carlo, and are building a private hideaway on Breckhou, a granite slab of an island

in the English Channel. They own or have owned stakes in six of London's best casinos, including the Ritz, a yacht, a brewery, and one of Britain's biggest car dealership chains. The acquisition is being made through Ellerman, the Barclay's investment arm.

Since Trafalgar House launched its bid for Northern, focusing the spotlight on its finances, its shares have fallen like a stone. The sale of the Ritz provided some cheer, with the ordinary adding 1p to close at 31p, less than half their value last December. The convertible preference shares also bounced 2.75p to 51p, but at that level they still yield almost 15 per cent, which suggests the City doubts whether investors will ever receive the payout.

The whole group is now worth just £334m, less than the £400m Hong Kong Land, Trafalgar's largest shareholder, has injected into the company since 1992 to secure a 26 per cent stake.

Battling to cope with tough trading conditions in all its core markets, Trafalgar is expected to make a substantial full year loss for the 12 months just finished.

One of their friends said yesterday: "There is nothing sinister about them. They are modest men and they wish to remain private. All their businesses are private and they do not want or need publicity, glorification or deification."

The brothers are currently in the throes of building a Gothic castle which dominates the northern coastline of Breckhou. Last week they made several ultimately unsuccessful attempts to prevent the transmission of a BBC television programme, the Spin, which involved filming on Breckhou and questioned their excessive secrecy.

Their other interests include a shareholding in Chime, the holding company for Lowe Bell, the public relations company run by Baroness Thatcher's favourite media adviser, Sir Tim Bell. They also have a

Purchase fulfils 30-year dream

DAVID HELLIER

The Barclay Brothers fulfilled what is believed to be a 30-year ambition yesterday when they successfully concluded the £75m purchase of the Ritz Hotel in London. The brothers' prestige hotel interests already include the Howard Hotel in London and the Mirabeau in Monaco, in addition to media and shipping interests.

In recent weeks the brothers, who have owned The European newspaper since the beginning of 1992, have also been linked with the bidding for The Scotsman, which has been put up for sale by its owners. Frederick and David Barclay, whose businesses are all in private hands, are the most

private of businessmen. They earned their first fortune by converting boarding houses in Bayswater into higher-grade hotels in the 1960s. Property dealers at heart, their wealth is now estimated at around £500m.

Before buying Breckhou, one of the Channel islands, the brothers lived in Monaco and liked to lunch together, unaccompanied, in the Cafe de Paris, near the Monte Carlo casino. They are hard to tell apart, except that one parts his hair on the right, the other on the left.

Their other interests include a shareholding in Chime, the holding company for Lowe Bell, the public relations company run by Baroness Thatcher's favourite media adviser, Sir Tim Bell. They also have a

shareholding in London Club, which owns the leases to a number of London casinos. The brothers are currently in the throes of building a Gothic castle which dominates the northern coastline of Breckhou. Last week they made several ultimately unsuccessful attempts to prevent the transmission of a BBC television programme, the Spin, which involved filming on Breckhou and questioned their excessive secrecy.

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Keegan was an appropriate visitor to the conference, nicely fitting into its themes – New Labour, New Britain, Newcastle

Thanks to the machinations of the local team's supporters, the citizens of Brighton may soon be deprived of their football team. Yet the bars and halls of the town were this week alive with football chat: the Labour Party Conference wasn't able to stop talking about the national game.

Tony Blair (notably honoured by a delegate as the only party leader skilled in keepy-keep) in particular was exposing his allegiance all over the place. Thanks to him, Eric Cantona became the first French footballer to be named captain in a big conference speech. Kevin Keegan slipped in there too, when Blair alluded to his head-to-head meeting with the Newcastle boss earlier in the week. "For the first time since I became leader," he said, "I have done something which impressed my children."

You could tell at the time that the encounter was an important moment for Blair, he was anxious not to fail in the eyes of his sons, not to mention the lenses of the brigade of photographers hoping for a prat-fall. At that sports centre on Monday, his body language betrayed a man considering his head as he padded the ball back and forth to the famous badger-striped head no fewer than 26 times. Not a bad performance, that: last summer I spent five hours with my mate playing head tennis and our best rally was 13. But then, neither of us was Kevin Keegan.

Keegan was an appropriate visitor to the conference, nicely fitting into its themes – New Labour, New Britain, Newcastle. He addressed a fringe meeting which drew a larger crowd than the Goldstone Ground

has boasted for months. His theme was upbeat – money flooding into football. Euro 96 could be a world beater if promoted aggressively; such excitement in his area that 4,000 people turn up to watch Newcastle train.

A different vision of the game, and indeed a different turn-out (12), occurred at another meeting later that evening. In a hotel room just down the prom from where Keegan had performed, Glyn Ford MBE was hosting a discussion about the problems English fans have when they follow their team in Europe. Politicians are regularly characterised as selfish but no one could accuse Ford of being motivated by self-interest in this issue: he is a Manchester City season ticket holder.

However, being a Euro MP he had become aware over the five years

Jim White



ON SATURDAY

since English clubs were re-admitted into Europe, of the appalling treatment regularly meted out to fans who follow their team abroad. The litany is extensive: Manchester United supporters in Istanbul, Chelsea followers in Bruges and particular-

ly Zaragoza. And the complaint is always the same: the assumption by all concerned that, to paraphrase Jane Austen, an English person in possession of a ticket to follow his team abroad must be in pursuit of a fight. Everywhere they are heard about, given little opportunity to sight-see, and rounded up even though they are not involved in any disturbance, and sent home. Veal calves have it easy, it seems.

It is a difficult subject, this. As John Williams, professor of football studies at Leicester University, pointed out to the meeting, the one export in which England was a world leader during the 1980s was hooliganism. The citizens of Luxembourg, Stockholm or Turin would prefer their police behaved without regard to civil rights rather than allow a re-run of the mayhem that was visited on

them by young Englishmen who once arrived in their cities apparently determined that nothing remain still standing on their departure. And though back home things have changed, and though we here may be aware of the distinction between the decent folk who follow clubs and the delinquents that attach themselves to the English team, you would hardly blame Dubliners if they were less than open-armed the next time English fans of any hue visit their city.

It would help, Professor Williams suggested, if some of the ring leaders of England violence were arrested rather than merely being watched. It would help, too, if the FA did not arrange friendlies in places like Dublin, or indeed Oslo, so justly accessible to the job.

Plus it would help if the clubs themselves did not collude in the

maltreatment business by insisting, occasionally to the point of threatening to take away season tickets, their fans do not travel independently and go on official trips instead. It is on official trips that fans are cattle-herded around, swept in and out of their destination, in short not trusted.

The assumption by the clubs is that the only way to deliver trouble-free support is to treat fans as if they were a consignment of liquid nitrogen, rather than civilised people. But the clubs may be driven in this instance by another motive: the fact they charge considerably more for their appalling service than independents offering better packages. As Kevin Keegan said, football's financial health has never been ruder. And, as always, it is the fan who pays the price.

England failing the skills test

The first month of rugby union's new era has been a poor one for the spectator, with barely a game worth shouting about. **Steve Bale reports**

It is probably too soon to judge, it may even be an illusion, but on the evidence of the season so far impartial observers are in agreement: the standard of club rugby in England is depressingly low.

A year ago, with the World Cup to look forward to, we were celebrating the club game's new age of ambition. Now we seem to be locked into a cycle of attritional rugby which, although it may be good enough for the English First Division, is never good enough to put upon a world stage.

As it happened, last season degenerated so badly from its promising beginnings that it really was better to travel hopefully than to arrive at the World Cup, from which everyone came home saying the Courage Championship was totally inadequate as preparation for England sides.

By the common consent of coaches, who just possibly have a vested interest in saying so, players are trying to play fluid rugby but – also by common consent – are being prevented from doing so by their own inadequacy and intractable refereeing. OK, there have been some good games – Bristol v Harlequins comes to mind – but somehow most of us seem to have missed them.

"Are the clubs trying?" Mark Evans, coach of the promoted Saracens, asks. "Probably a number are. Are they being successful? Only marginally. Why? Either a lack of skill or the way

some officials officiate, or probably a mixture of both. To be fair, the rugby correspondents tend on the whole to see the big pressure games which tend to be the least attractive."

True enough, but is that not an indictment of the leading clubs? If players cannot cope with the pressures of games at the top of the First Division, this afternoon's between Wasps and Bath at Sudbury being a timely example, how can they be expected to cope playing for England against New Zealand?

"My view is that in England we somehow have to invent a better game between us all," Jack Rowell, the England manager, said. "A lot of the responsibility falls on referees: can we develop a game of movement where we stop it only for the right reasons?"

This is a philosophical point which draws an unflattering distinction between refereeing in the spirit of running rugby, as practised in the southern hemisphere, and refereeing to the letter of the laws, as is the accusation of many coaches here.

So on the one hand Rowell was this week chiding Steve Griffiths, the Rugby Football Union's referees' officer, that his officials were not doing enough to prevent the various forms of persistent offside which would terminally stifle any game. And on the other he is fed up with the counterproductive podiatry which focuses on other, less heinous offences.

This can appear to mean

picking and choosing which laws you fancy, but if it produces a better form of rugby – witness the recent Bledisloe Cup matches between Australia and New Zealand – so be it. Down under, they have never been hung up on the rule of rugby law and their game is the better for it.

In its absence, however, there is frustration. The Wasps coach, Rob Smith, the great apostle of rugby in perpetual motion, said: "Skill levels are nowhere near good enough, but at the moment we're not even testing our skill levels because of how often the game is stopped."

"The fact is that people have genuinely been trying to use the ball more – but that's not the same thing as playing an expansive game. It's not just as simple as saying let's use the backs. The games in South Africa and New Zealand are very structured and highly mobile but do not involve just chucking the ball around for the sake of it. By contrast, we have an awfully long way to go."

In other words, we in this part of the world have effectively cut ourselves off from forward rugby by thinking. Just as the RFU insisted to the bitter end on sticking by every last full-stop and comma of amateurism, so now many of its referees – fearful perhaps of the judgement of the assessors who follow them everywhere – dare not abandon their own party-line.

"We need to introduce more pace into our game, and our referees can help in that," Rowell



Gridlock at the breakdown: the sterile pile-up has been the bane of rugby this season

Photograph: Peter Jay

said. "Club matches are very intense but they are not always pacy, and going from that on to the international field against full-time players who are playing provincial rugby and Super 12 really is a giant stride."

In other words, England have somehow to find a way of emulating New Zealand methods – which, as Brian Hanlon of Bristol points out, is easier said than done. "All the clubs are trying to come to terms with the more dynamic rugby the national selectors are requiring, but it's no good trying to play

like New Zealanders if your skills aren't good enough."

Usefully Hanlon, the club's coaching co-ordinator, is himself a New Zealander so should know what he is talking about. But again it is not only the players but the poor old referees who get his blame. As Hanlon puts it: "The referee is the dominant player in English rugby by far too often."

And therefore not the players, who will simply have to work harder than ever before to get themselves and their rugby in adequate shape both to face the

world and overcome the obsessive attentions of their own refs.

"In New Zealand all the skill work is done in the summer: touch football two or three times a week from three through to full-backs," Hanlon said. "But in New Zealand it's a culture whereas here it's not. You can't change that, you can't expect England to become a rugby culture overnight."

But you can expect England to maximise what it has – which appears to mean acquainting players with the wider world of refereeing interpretations before

players have to go to New Zealand and South Africa, however well England may do in home one-offs such as next month's against the Springboks.

The trouble is pedantry here is as far removed as you can get from the *laissez-faire* of the southern hemisphere and until that changes British, specifically English, players will be at a self-inflicted disadvantage. "We are talking an unrealistic stance with the rest of the world," Rob Smith said. "We are training people for the jungle by sending them to Mothercare."

Australia turns on Dwyer

Bob Dwyer, the coach who achieved guru status before, during and after guiding the Wallabies to the 1991 World Cup, yesterday paid the penalty for his team's failure in the '95 tournament when he was dismissed by the Australian Rugby Football Union, writes Steve Bale.

His dignity would have been better served had he accepted the end of the recent World Cup as an obvious time to stand down, instead of putting his name forward again. It had been made clear by the New South Wales RU last week that its five votes would go to Greg Smith, the NSW coach, rather than Dwyer and though Queensland's three went to its own John Connolly, Smith attracted enough of the remaining six votes to win the election.

Dwyer's fate was effectively sealed by the Rob Andrew drop goal which England knocked out Australia in the quarter-final, the Wallabies having already lost their opening game to South Africa. These defeats provoked intense criticism, though Dwyer was not there for yesterday's verdict because he is on a temporary assignment in Paris with Racing Club.

As this is the second time the ARFU has turned against him, he already knew the feeling and will hardly be consoled by yesterday's uncomfortable tribute from Bruce Hayman, the ARFU chief executive. "Bob has given the union 10 years of unprecedented service."

Wales also have a new coach, albeit for just the one match against Fiji on 11 November. The Welsh RU yesterday announced the appointment of Kevin Dwyer, Wales A coach and former Wales scrum-half, to take over as caretaker coach from the previous caretaker-coach, Alex Evans, who is about to have a shoulder operation.

Wasps brace themselves to withstand the Bath backlash

Bath lost at Wasps last season – which according to a tradition hallowed by 11 years of ascendancy is reason enough for the vengeful spirit they will apply to this afternoon's first return to Sudbury, writes Steve Bale.

It has long been the essence of the club that each new group of players swiftly assimilate the lessons of their most distressing experiences. Already Wasps have been given one blow to their presumption with the cup-final defeat at the end of last season.

Last we have forgotten – and it would be easy to have done so since the Rugby Football Union chose that very May day to sack Will Carling as captain – Bath succeeded handsomely at Twickenham where they had been narrowly beaten in Brent six weeks earlier.

Another, perfectly topical beauty of Bath is that there is no such thing as a star syndrome at the club. This was famously illustrated when Paul Simpson played for England at Lans-

downe Road in 1987 and the very next week at Lansdown, a suburb of Bath, for his club's second team.

Now it is Victor Ubogu's turn and, given that there was a similar contretemps involving the England prop last season, you have to wonder how much longer he will wish to devote himself to Bath, or indeed how much longer Bath will wish to devote themselves to him.

Philip de Glanville, the captain, has publicly called Ubogu's

commitment into question, a withering stricture. And the fact that Ubogu is displaced by a loose-head prop playing for Bath on the tight head for the first time is both pointed and calculated.

Dave Hilton, a Scottish internationalist who has not played league rugby for eight months, may not be overjoyed himself once he has tangled with the French loose head, Nick Popplewell. His inclusion, or rather Ubogu's exclusion, is meant as a threat to some and incentive

to others. "If anyone isn't playing as well as we expect, he'll be dropped," De Glanville said.

Wasps share third place with Leicester behind Bath and Harlequins. For the visit to bottom-placed West Hartlepool, the Tigers make what may be a portentous change at half-back. On grounds of mundane efficiency nothing else, it is not hard to imagine the supposedly temporary restoration of last season's pair, Jez Harris and Aadel Kardoni, lasting longer than today.

A calf injury keeps Carling out of Quins' game against Saracens, an untimely absence when rugby-as-therapy has given him an apparently efficacious diversion from his personal problems. Premature as it may seem to say so, Gloucester's visit to Orell will probably have critical implications when relegation comes to be decided next April. Bristol and Sale would demur at a similar description of their game but need the points no less urgently.

All the aforementioned are already gearing themselves up for professional rugby even while the RFU's consideration of what to do next drags on, keeping the increasingly irritated leading clubs on tenterhooks. They may be interested to know they are not alone.

In Scotland, Colin Paterson, coach of the disfigured scrum-half Gary Armstrong and a former Curliere rugby league professional, wishes to avail himself of the immediately applica-

ble free gateway into rugby union agreed by the International Board last weekend by turning out for Hawick Harlequins.

No way, says the Scottish Rugby Union, not at any rate until "confirmation" of the IB's Tokyo decisions is received. Well here it is: as soon as Vernon Hugh, chairman of the IB's amateur committee, arrived back at Heathrow he said every aspect of the sweeping-away of amateurism is here and now. That was last Sunday.

WEEKEND FIXTURE GUIDE

TODAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Football 10.00 (live) start EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP TWO 10.00 (live) start 10.00 (live)							

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sport

McGhee marks out Leicester's future

The writing is on the wall for Filbert Street's ambitious young manager, writes Phil Shaw

In the reception area beneath Filbert Street's imposing double-decker stand hangs a dayglo banner declaring: 'The Future's Marked Out'. Mark McGhee came up with the word-play, and the early signs are that Leicester City will not be marking time in the First Division.

The writing is also on the wall in the Leicester manager's office. A graph has three targets picked out: 51 points, Relegation; 74, Play-offs; 90, Champions. The curve plotting their progress to date shows a team on course to fulfil McGhee's loftiest aim.

Today, five months after the end of their latest brief sojourn in the Premiership, they take a two-point lead to third-placed Barnsley. Many Leicester supporters, accustomed to their side flitting between the divisions, might be satisfied to see Oakwell temporarily replaced by Old Trafford in next year's fixtures.

'Leicester have never been a Wolves or a Newcastle who've fallen from grace - the potential has been unfulfilled'

The 38-year-old McGhee, who was Alex Ferguson's first signing at Aberdeen and has plainly absorbed some of his restless perfectionism, is committed to changing that mentality.

This one-time goal-poacher has undergone a transformation himself since joining the gamekeeper's ranks four years ago. "When you're young you don't see yourself as management material, although on reflection I always had something to say. Probably too much at times."

"After I eventually took over at Reading, I remember ringing Jim Smith, who was then at Portsmouth, and saying: 'I'd just like to apologise for all the shit I gave you in the two years you had me at Newcastle. I realise now what a pain in the arse I must have been'."

The last Scot to manage Leicester, Jock Wallace, was also renowned for his plain speaking. "This city needed something to believe in," he once announced, "so I gave it me." McGhee's legacy at Leicester will, he promises, be the sort of improvement he left at Reading. "That was a thousand times better than I found it. They could have no complaints."

The former Scotland striker is convinced that, increasingly, the Premiership is "the only place to be", but has no plans to leave just yet. What is happening at Leicester, on and off the park, persuades him that they can break the mould which has them cast as too big for the First but not big enough for the Premiership.

"Leicester have never been a Newcastle or a Wolves who've



Vision on: Alex Ferguson's first signing at Aberdeen has plainly absorbed some of his mentor's restless perfectionism

Photograph: David Ashdown

fallen from grace," he says. "The potential has been unfulfilled, but that's what attracted and excited me. There's enough support to get 30,000 in consistently once the rest of the stadium is developed. The revenue generated by bums on seats will go back into the playing side."

The team is already much changed since McGhee succeeded Brian Little last December, in personnel and in style. The new regime discovered, in the manager's words, "a squad short of Premier League

quality". Survival might have been possible had he bought four players of the requisite class, he maintains, but that was not feasible.

In the event, McGhee had to sell Mark Draper for £3.25m to Aston Villa before buying, Scott Taylor, a midfield powerhouse, followed him from Reading; Steve Corica, an Australian striker, made a strong impression before breaking a leg; and they will be soon be joined by Zeljko Kalac, a 6ft 7in goalkeeper from Sydney, and Poutis Kilmack,

IFK Gothenburg's Swedish international defender.

The long-ball game which led Leicester into the land of milk and money 18 months ago is no more. "I'm certainly not knocking it, but my education has been with clubs who passed the ball," McGhee explains. "That's all I know." Significantly, one of his first buys was Gary Parker, a playmaker surplus to Little's requirements at Villa.

However, a surprising number of his predecessor's players remain. "In this country we tend to

underestimate what players are capable of. We don't ask enough of them. There are people here passing a ball better than we ever thought possible, simply because we've encouraged them to do it. It was funny when we played Reading. Both teams looked the same and were trying to do the same things."

Leicester have long had a reputation as a selling club: from Banks, McLintock and Shilton through Allan Clarke and Nish to Lineker, Alan Smith and McAllister. "It'll be

the same for some time yet," McGhee concedes. "The important thing is that we don't sell to pay the bills. If we can sell a Draper and bring in several quality players, that's good business."

Gary McAllister remarked recently that it did not hurt Leicester enough when they went down. McGhee detected a similar fatalism during the summer. "There was this sense of 'At least we'll win more games next season'. That's what we've got to fight. I've told my lads not to look

back on last Sunday's Derby-Millwall game on TV and say: 'Well, at least we're better than those two', but to consider the Man Utd-Liverpool match and think: 'We'll never beat them unless we improve'."

Mention of United is a reminder of McGhee's link with Ferguson when Aberdeen won the European Cup-Winners' Cup more than a decade ago. The pair are often portrayed as disciple and mentor, which brings a wry smile to the face of the former. The relationship was, he admits, volatile at times.

"I'm more complimented by comparisons than Alex, because I don't have to say how good a manager he is. But I think they're ridiculous. We're both Scottish and that's about it. I don't mimic what he did, though of course it's had an influence on me."

Did it extend to flinging crockery and pies around during the half-time team talk? "It's been known," he grins. Yet his own favourite Fergie story features flying underwear.

"After a reserve game at Forfar he was shouting and wagging a finger at one of the boys. In anger he kicked the laundry basket, and these pants flew through the air and landed on another guy's head

'There are people here passing the ball better, simply because we have encouraged them to do it'

like a hat. He didn't move; just sat there rigid."

"Fergie didn't even notice until he finished raging. Then he looked at the boy and said: 'And you can take those f--- pants off your head. What the hell do you think you're playing at?'"

There was more to Ferguson's man-management than control by fear. According to McGhee, he not only appreciated that every player was different but knew who craved reassurance and who responded to a rollicking.

"He also did what he's still doing at United. He gave us a persecution complex about Celtic and Rangers, the Scottish FA and the Glasgow media: the whole West of Scotland thing. He reckoned they were all against Aberdeen, and it worked a treat."

But the most valuable lesson McGhee learned, cemented during a spell with Hamburg, was the importance of possession and patience. "When we got into advanced areas in Scottish games, all we wanted to do was pump the ball into the box. In Europe, it was crucial not to cross unless it was to someone. You came out again and just kept the ball. I like to think I bring more of that into our matches."

Leicester, he insists, are "bigger than Aberdeen", whose achievements in the Ferguson era fuelled his faith in the capacity of middle-ranking clubs to muscle in on the elite. The future is marked out, and the cups coveted by McGhee are not the kind which mess up the dressing-room walls.

York contemplate business as usual after United

Team news

The nature of fame was delivered to York City's players late on Tuesday night. "I'm sure you'll all want to congratulate them," a disc jockey in a local nightclub said, "after a fantastic win over..." a pause. "Manchester City."

They had a bigger Coca-Cola Cup prize, of course. Manchester United, but in a city not known for its football passion facts do not always remain intact.

Glamour, neither, as York hit earth today with a match against the team immediately above them in the lower reaches of the Second Division, Wrexham. The crowd will reflect the change, dropping to nearer the 3,600 average than the 9,300 of Tuesday.

The attendance will be smaller, but standards will have to be higher according to their manager, Alan Little. "All right,

it was Manchester United," he said, "but if we'd made some of the mistakes against a Second Division side I'd have been furious."

The Coca-Cola Cup will also be in the mind of Barnsley's manager, Danny Wilson, whose side could be on top of the First Division tonight if they beat the leaders, Leicester, at Oakwell. In his case the future will act as the

Guy Hodgson on the weekend in the Endsleigh League

spur rather than the immediate past. Referring to their pairing with Arsenal in the third round, he said: "We did well against Newcastle last season in the cup and that gave us all a lift. I'm

hoping the Arsenal game will have a similar kind of effect."

Millwall, two points behind, also have a chance of going top which would complete a momentous week after their 4-2 victory over Everton at Goodison on Wednesday. "It's do or die," says manager Dave Bassett. "If we lose, we're out of the league. If we win, we're in. It's a U-turn - they've lost their last three games at Vicarage Road. Conversely their away form this

season - three wins, two draws - is better than their home."

Graham Taylor, of Wolves, and Sheffield United's Dave Bassett are two high-profile managers anxious to improve home and away. Wolves, with two wins from 10 League games, travel to Ipswich, who will give a debut to their £300,000 signing from Celtic, Tony Mowbray. United, eliminated from

the Coca-Cola Cup by Third Division Burnley, face Derby County, a game matching two clubs with high ambition and lesser achievement this season.

Stoke City are also struggling but hoping that the Dr Jekyll characters that beat Chelsea will emerge against Norwich, rather than the less wholesome lot that have managed only three goals in five home League games.

Barnsley v Leicester

Malby, Barnsley's on-loan Liverpool player, could replace striker Liddell (ankle). Leicester's Northern Ireland defender Hill can play. On-loan defender Rollins is doubtful.

Charlton v Grimsby

Charlton defender Ruffs and striker Nelson return and Williams, back on a one-month contract, is in the squad. Ex-Ipswich midfielder Bonetti makes his league debut for Grimsby.

Crystal Palace v Sunderland

Palace are expected to restore Readman and Taylor in attack. Sunderland have had Phil Gray, Kelly and Melville released from international duty.

Huddersfield v Port Vale

On-loan Brown returns at right-back, after being cup-tied in midweek, in place of Dyson. Vale hope striker Mills (knee) will be fit to play.

Ipswich v Wolverhampton

Defender Mowbray makes his Ipswich debut after a £300,000 move from Celtic. Stoddard (groin) and Marshall (hamstring) return. Wolves are expected to be unchanged.

Oxford v Portsmouth

Oxford are expected to be unchanged. Portsmouth include Durkin, Wood and Dobson in place of Petrick, Hall and Russell.

Stoke v Norwich

Stoke's Gough, Clarkson and Sigurdsson are doubtful. David Eggen, Oygerson and Davlin stand by. Norwich teenager O'Neill may make his debut in place of suspended Eddie. Gurn may return in goal.

Watford v Millwall

Palmer makes his home debut for Watford in midfield. Millwall's full-back Thatcher is doubtful. Van Blarik may retreat from midfield, with on-loan Black on stand-by.

West Brom v Reading

Ashcroft may replace Hunt in Albion's attack. Coldicott again deputises for Hamilton (foot). Reading keeper Miskell on international duty so Shepperson deputises. Joint-manager Quinn has been cleared to play by Northern Ireland.

No one who was there could deny there was something weirdly divine about the Minstermen's performance

It was nothing new, the Manchester United thing. Really, it wasn't. Been there, done that...

Here in York, rheumy taproom eyes still moisten over the ale as the names of the 1955 side: 'Forgan, Phillips, Howe... Bottom, Wilkinson...' are recounted with Barnstone-worthy-like rhapsody. That year, of course, City became the first Third Division side, North or South, to reach the semi-final of the FA Cup, dumping the Blackpool of Matthews and Mortensen, the Spurs side of Blanchflower and Ramsey (*The Daily Express*: NO FLUKE. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SIX!) and Notts County, only to lose to Newcastle after a replay (Arthur Bottom's disallowed goal in the first game is still growingly disputed.)

It is the sort of thing we do, providing hope and manna for the little club, the little man the world over. And there are still

a few arthritic memories that become sprightly at the thought of 1938 when it all began. Then, the Second Division leaders Coventry, and the First Division sides, West Brom and Middlesbrough, were routinely disposed of on a pleasantly audacious jaunt to the sixth round, only to lose to Huddersfield, again in a replay.

The latter-day triumphs include, naturally, that famous 1985 scuttling of Arsenal with a late Keith Houchen penalty. The following season, in the League Cup, we beat Chelsea 1-0 at Bootham Crescent, though the 3-0 reversal in the second leg rather taints the memory of that particular feat.

As with the heinous Bottom incident, there have been other cases of bad luck. In consecutive seasons, home draws against Liverpool in the FA Cup resulted in replays. In the first, in 1985, the Anfield side shad-

ed 7-0. However, the following year a Keith Walwyn "goal", which would have put us 2-1 up with 20-odd minutes left, was annulled for no visible reason and the game was lost 3-1 after extra time.

Still, it has all been grand stuff. However, until a few weeks ago, the club's recent ineptitude in cup ties brought no optimism for a return to those days when, in the Coca-Cola Cup, we were drawn against, of all teams, Manchester United. We like them big, but not colossal.

On the morning of the first leg I instructed my bookmaker to add two noughts to the 12/1 on offer about City winning the tie. A few mildly insane York fans were hoping to hang on to a one-goal deficit. The more seriously deranged spoke of nicking a draw. But, among the realists, there was no hankering for the taste of sardines. We were going to lose.

FAN'S EYE VIEW
No 114
York City
PAUL SAYER

Worse; it might be a humiliation. Best send the dog to the relatives for a while. And move those ornaments.

But, sweetness and light, how wrong we were.

Eleven years ago the dear Lord above, in a perverse mood, sent a lightning bolt on to the city's Minster. And perhaps it was in a mood of belated contrition that, two and a half weeks back, he decided that the team whose nickname bears the name of his house should bring the town some recompense. Indeed, 20 minutes after the kick-off, no one who was there

could deny there was something weirdly divine about the Minstermen's performance. Off-leaden feet sprouted wings, the usually pragmatic passes from the back were sprayed around with laser precision. As for United, were they Scarborough in disguise? Paul Barnes scored, scored again, and Tony Barnes added the third. History was made. Sublime, quintessential history. The greatest York City game ever? Arguably. Probably.

Family pets were dispatched happily home in taxis all over town. Glassware was retrieved from holes in the garden. And newly hopeful football widows enhanced nightwear with the newly erotic logo "Portakabin". Those of us who were there required counselling to cope with the joy. Four-hour debriefing sessions had to be held in the pub. Yet there was still that nagging business of the second leg

with Cole, Keane, Schmeichel and That Gallic Chap returning to spoil the party.

Come the match, come horror when Dean Kiely, our brilliant young goalkeeper, suffered a bashed-in face in the 3-0 demolition of Hull City the week-end before. In the tap rooms, upper lips stiffened. These things are sent to try us. But to lose Deano, of all people... Since United had poached our youth team keeper a week before (only the most paranoid could smell a rat here) there was only the 19-year-old Andy Warington left - 61 times on the subs' bench and never a first-team game. He would have to be a hero, a saint such as the city breeds. Hopefully.

At kick-off time, hopes were still afloat. Thirteen minutes later, when the United we feared had decimated the City defence and strolled to a two-goal lead, they were completely grounded.

Or were the lads just teasing us? You can see the funny side of it now, of course. But it wasn't until they stopped remembering the hype of that first fortnight that they began to get a grip. And in the 58th minute they scored.

In the second half it was all guts and sweat. Le Philosopher, a rare creature on Bootham Crescent turf, struck a scything shot across goal. Cole threatened, but could not deliver. Then, with 10 minutes left, Scholes gave them a third. Now it was only 4-3 on aggregate. Ten minutes to go, and how the second hand of one's watch snags at times like this. But we dug in. We had more to prove than this millionaire-littered lot. And we survived.

The smiles are unstoppable at the moment. We are trying not to be smug. As I said, it was nothing new. Really.

Oh, but thank you, God. Thank you!

150 في الامم

SPORT

FOOTBALL: McGhee marks out
Leicester's future ascendancy 26

RUGBY UNION: Why hasn't there been
a game worth watching this season? 23

Radlinski shoulders England hopes

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

There has rarely been a better demonstration of the vast difference in depth in England and Australia than the two teams that line up for the opening game of the Halifax Centenary World Cup at Wembley today.

Australia, riven by internal revolt, can still field a side with few obvious weaknesses. England, with a few injuries at the wrong time, are reduced to fielding several players for whom fingers will be firmly crossed this afternoon.

Fortunately, the one with the weightiest responsibility on his shoulders appears ideally equipped to take it all in his

stride. At 19, Kris Radlinski has not yet learnt the meaning of nerves and self-doubt. With him at full-back and Gary Connolly and Martin Offiah fit, it would be possible to be quite sanguine about English chances. Without those two, the backs look distinctly threadbare.

Barrie-Jon Mather has benefited from a summer with the Western Reds in Perth, but the defensive combination that he must strike up with his fellow centre, Paul Newlove, is likely to be severely tested. While John Bentley is as strong and willing as any winger, he is no Offiah in the match-winning stakes.

England must probe for weaknesses out wide in the Australia side and may fancy their chances of finding them in

the wing-centre partnership of John Hopoate and Terry Hill. Both are damaging runners, but they are also inclined to blow the occasional fuse and do something crazy. It has to be said, however, that Bentley falls into the same category.

The vast majority of Australia's play will be channelled through their captain, Brad Fittler, while England will look to Shaun Edwards to impose a pattern of play that the Aussies will find uncomfortable. Short kicks over the defence and darting runs with back-row forwards chiming in at different angles are the best hope.

There will be anxious eyes on Karl Harrison as the game wears on today. There is no more honest prop forward, but

his ability to get back 10 metres after every tackle throughout the 80 minutes has to be subject to some doubt. Chris Joynt will be available as a replacement in the second half, but England badly need a full match – and one of his very best – from the other prop, Andy Platt.

The England coach, Phil Larder, has been wise to leave Andy Farrell in his club position of loose forward, where his full array of skills – not least his kicking game – can find their fullest expression. Farrell is one of six Wigan players in the England 17 – rather below their usual complement – but still a backbone that the Australian coach, Bob Fulton, regards as an advantage for the English side.

Fulton, whose role as the

ARL's chief protagonist in their struggle against the Super League is never far from the surface, has described Wigan as Britain's only Super League team and the way they have dominated so far this season bears out his case.

For Larder, however, this is a long way from being an un-mixed blessing. He cannot say it too loudly, for fear of being accused of having his alibis ready in advance, but stomping all over vastly inferior teams in domestic rugby is no preparation for internationals.

The equivalent in Australia's team is the six man representation from Fulton's Manly side. The difference is that they, despite a successful season that took them to within one match

of the Winfield Cup, rarely had an unchallenging match.

One of the aspects of rugby league that is often taken for granted could be a major factor today. The play-the-ball is the equivalent of the serve in tennis – if that goes wrong, nothing else can be right – and the quality of service from the two hookers will be crucial.

A respectable crowd of around 35,000 – swelled by Diana Ross's entourage – would get the World Cup off to an encouraging start. A good contest between the favourites to make it to the final in three weeks' time will give it the momentum it needs. The show starts when the thin lady sings.

Powell on the prowl, Clarke's ambition, page 24

ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA

ENGLAND	AUSTRALIA
K. Radlinski	1. T. Brasher
J. Robinson	2. R. Whelan
B-J. Mather	3. M. Coyne
P. Newlove	4. T. Hill
J. Bentley	5. J. Hopoate
D. Powell	6. B. Fittler
S. Edwards	7. G. Toovey
K. Harrison	8. D. Gillespie
L. Jackson	9. W. Bartlett
A. Platt	10. M. Carroll
D. Batts	11. S. Menzies
P. Clarke	12. P. Day
A. Farrell	13. J. Dymock

Substitutes: 14. B. Gillingham (E. Hales), 15. C. Joynt (S. Hales), 16. N. A. Harty (Wigan), 17. S. Harty (Wigan).

Referee: S. Cummings (Widnes)

Tomorrow: Fiji v South Africa (at Wembley, 2.30pm)
New Zealand v Tonga (at Warrington, 6pm)

Jackson boycotts federation

Athletics
MIKE ROWBOTTOM

British athletics, already gathering itself for next year's Olympic challenge, was jolted out of its stride yesterday when Colin Jackson announced that he would not compete in any meetings organised by the British Athletic Federation.

The world's 110 metres hurdles record holder is still angry following last season's dispute with BAF's chief executive, Peter Radford, and has vowed to boycott all but the Welsh games and the Olympic trials in this country while Radford still retains his position.

It is a very personal rebuke for Radford, coming only a day after he had secured a press conference that the disputes over payment and selection which had marred last season were unlikely to be repeated.

Asked whether he had patched things up with Jackson and Linford Christie, who missed the first two domestic meetings along with others from their management company Nuff Respect because of a pay row, Radford said he had spoken to both. "I think we will have a much better relationship this coming year," he said. "I don't think it's going to be a major problem for us."

That statement now looks like a hostage to fortune. Whatever discussions Radford had with the two former world champions do not appear to have been substantive. As Jackson's outburst has confirmed, peace has yet to break out in British athletics.

A spokeswoman for Nuff Respect said yesterday that Jackson's stance was "not necessarily" shared by others in the company. Christie, currently on holiday in the United States, is unlikely to put together his schedule for next year until November, although he has indicated that he will pick and choose his competitions and still insists he will not defend his Olympic title.

Jackson was strongly criticised by Radford when he withdrew halfway through the AAA championships and trials because of a groin strain and then won a race in Padua the fol-

lowing day. Radford also criticised his selectors for giving Jackson a provisional world championship place dependent on him proving his fitness two weeks before the event.

Jackson, who did not defend his world title, claimed he had needed to race in Padua to test the extent of his injury. He objected to having a fitness deadline imposed upon him and was also upset that his trustworthiness had been called into question.

"If Colin feels as strongly as that, then so be it," Tony Ward, the BAF spokesman, said. "We certainly won't be taking this dispute into the season with us."

Malcolm Arnold, who finds himself unfortunately placed given his joint role as Jackson's coach and the BAF director of coaching, spoke to Jackson about his plans a week ago. "He said the only things he would pencil in would be the Welsh games and the Olympic trials," Arnold said. "I took that to mean that he was to come up and see me in Birmingham and we'd plan the other meetings in then."

Arnold hopes to speak again to Jackson. "Obviously I'd like to see Britain's best athletes competing in Britain's best meetings," he said.

Like Arnold, Radford is also in a difficult situation. Earlier this week he stressed the efforts BAF had made to stimulate the grassroots of the sport – coaching courses were up by one-third, and 80,000 children had been involved in the Startrack development scheme. He also argued for significant financial support for athletes as Britain prepared bids for then 2001 world championships and 2008 Olympics.

But it is the present which is threatening to tangle itself around Radford's feet. Attendance were down at domestic meetings last season; sponsors were harder to secure. Jackson's announcement will have done nothing to help that situation. Nor will the continuing misunderstanding between the federation and Nuff Respect, who both claim that their willingness to talk has been ignored. British athletics can ill afford another season of civil war.



Smiles better: Les Ferdinand (left) is in confident mood as he shares a joke with the England goalkeeper David Seaman yesterday during training at Bisham Abbey. The Newcastle striker's 11 goals this season have earned him a recall to the squad for Wednesday's international in Norway. Glenn Moore, page 27. Photograph: David Ashdown

Maradona joins Dons

Football
NICK DUXBURY

Diego Maradona, one of the most talked-about players in the world, is to have a word with Oxford's finest during a whistle-stop visit organised by a bell-boy whom the former Argentinean captain befriended in a Buenos Aires hotel 10 years ago.

Maradona, whose response to putting England out of the 1986 World Cup by dubious means was to claim it was the "Hand of God", is to address the students on 6 November. Maradona, at 35 now a football heavyweight in both stature and standing, will follow political playmakers such as Mikhail Gorbachev into the debating

chamber, where he will talk about his life. How much of that will be about drugs, alleged Mafia links when he played for Naples, and other misdemeanours, remains to be seen.

"He is a dreamer, who fulfilled his dream to play in the World Cup. We are also dreamers," Esteban Cichello Hibner, the president of the university's L'Chain Society, said.

On the question of Maradona's colourful history, Hibner said: "There are more positive aspects to his life than negative. In any case, if we were to rule out speakers on the grounds of their past, we wouldn't have many speakers."

Hibner is the bell-boy who met his fellow Argentinean at the El Conquistador hotel in

1985. "He was a friendly guy. He didn't want me to carry his luggage, but I insisted. He used to buy me chocolate bars and call me 'Shortie'."

Their paths then diverged until Hibner, who will fly to Argentina and escort Maradona back to Oxford, made contact through the player's agent.

Last Saturday, Maradona's comeback with Boca Juniors after a 15-month ban, drew 70,000 fans. Only 900 can squeeze in the chamber at Oxford, where Maradona will speak via a translator for 20 minutes – less than half the normal time.

"He asked to have more time for questions," Hibner said. "He wants close contact with the students." A bit like his hand and the ball in '86.

Harford in for McKinlay

Blackburn Rovers are expected to sign their third new player in a week today after moving swiftly to signing Celtic for the Scottish midfielder, Billy McKinlay.

The Rovers manager, Ray Harford, matched a bid from Celtic for the Dundee United player yesterday. He expects to tie up the £1.75m transfer immediately, offering almost 50 per cent more than the Scottish club in personal terms.

Blackburn – who signed Lars Bohinen for £700,000 this week – have also recruited Graham Coughlan from the League of Ireland club, Bray Wanderers. The 21-year-old centre-half will join the club for an undisclosed fee, believed to be around £100,000.

Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds United manager, could be about to leave Elland Road to take up a position as technical director of the Football Association. The club's chairman, Leslie Silver, has agreed to let the FA talk to Wilkinson even though he has almost three years of his contract to run. "As responsible members of the Premier League, we would not raise an objection to the FA speaking to him," he said.

Wilkinson, who declined to say whether he was interested in the job, has hired David Williams, Mike Walker's former assistant at Everton, as his No 2.

Terry Venables, the England coach, could be another contender for the FA post, along with the former French and Scottish managers, Gerard Houllier and Andy Roxburgh, and Roy Hodgson, the English coach of the Swiss national team. The FA confirmed that three foreign coaches have been interviewed.

Arsenal have joined Middlesbrough in pursuing Brazil's Juninho. São Paulo's football director Julio Barzilaria said: "Any other clubs who want to buy our player will have to join the queue behind the English two."

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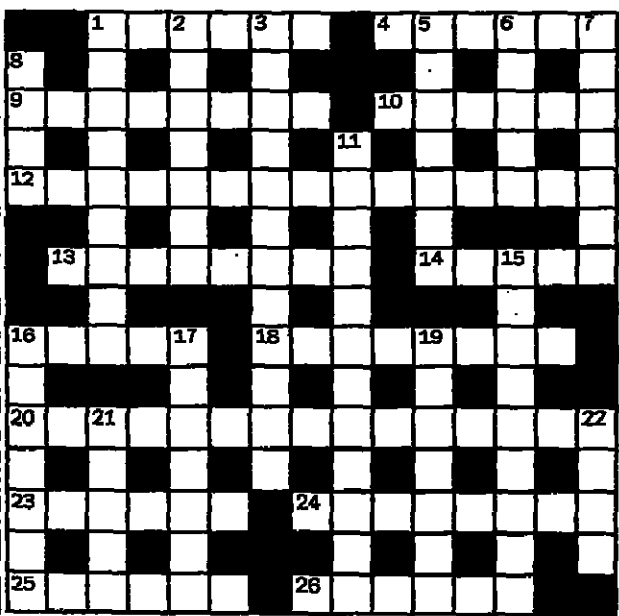
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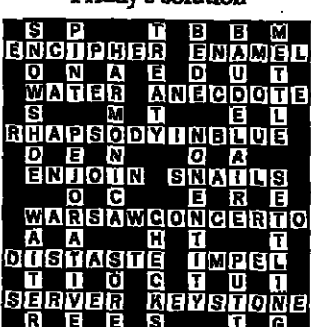
No 2799, Saturday 7 October

By Mass



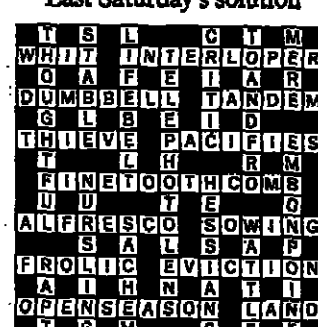
- ACROSS**
- Keen type's endless dispute (6)
 - Activates spirit's initial reserves (6)
 - Cheese off? Angry about incomplete service? (8)
 - In check – severely attacked, we hear (6)
 - Heads brilliant goal, among others (15)
 - What braces! Is that the new look? (3,3)
 - Swells crashing into craft offshore (5)
 - Time to rebuff witticisms about Union (3-2)
 - Cracked limb – involving ice, twisting at end of slide (8)
 - Girl's trick (meant heartlessly) dashed hopes? (15)
 - Allure? That's what a setter may have (4,2)
 - Warning: use eye protection during blistering day (8)
 - Tongue one included in meal (6)
 - Formal editor's about to be fired (6)

Friday's solution



- DOWN**
- Fight over club's remnants of Heavy Metal? (5,4)
 - Returns in vessels (7)
 - As such, the show must go on! (12)
 - Praise in part of theatre? (7)
 - Stomach strong drink, small measure (5)
 - It could be said SS included these primarily? (7)
 - Wood's bent? (4)
 - One who made a pile by dubious means... (5-7)
 - Simulated mobster in fiction (9)
 - Burdened, confused after seconds (7)
 - Down, mostly down's found in these? (7)
 - Party with solid support (7)
 - Produce southern hock (5)
 - Sports? Blue's right withdrawing (4)

Last Saturday's solution



The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the excellent Chambers Biographical Dictionary, worth £35. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5LJ. Please use the box number and postcode. Last week's winners were: Rosemary Houston, Kent; Geoff Wallis, London N19; Petr Jan Lachny, Huddersfield; Nigel Godfrey, Leicester; Mr Philip Marlow, Leicester.

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